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ECNS 494.01: Senior Seminar

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The University of Montana
Senior Seminar-ECNS 494
Spring 2016

SYLLABUS

INSTRUCTOR: Professor Kellenberg
CLASS HOURS: 11:10AM-12:00 PM, MWF
CLASS LOCATION: SS 340
OFFICE HOURS: MW 1:30-2:30 PM (or by appointment)
OFFICE LOCATION: Liberal Arts 404
TELEPHONE: 243-5612
EMAIL: Derek.Kellenberg@mso.umt.edu

Note: The following syllabus defines the rules and important dates for the semester. However, I reserve the right to make changes if the need arises.

Prerequisite: Senior status and an Economics major.

General Description: This is the capstone course for economics majors where students will integrate their knowledge and skills to analyze and discuss current economic topics. This semester we will be reading four new books by Nobel Prize winners and other influential economists. The reading list and schedule are outlined below. The course is designed to be a seminar/discussion course rather than a lecture course. As such, you will all be expected to have read all readings prior to coming to class and to participate in discussion.

Learning Outcomes: This course has three primary learning outcomes:

- (1) to develop group facilitation skills in leading discussion of economic ideas;
- (2) to solidify and enhance students' oral and written communication of complex economic topics; and
- (3) to gain new insights in contemporary economic topics in the profession among influential economists.

Grading: Grading for the course will be based on attendance/participation, two exams, and participation on the senior exit survey and senior exit exam. You will be expected to contribute to daily discussions on the readings so attendance and participation will constitute a large share of the overall grade. The overall grading breakdown is as follows:

Attendance/Participation (daily)	30%
Discussion leader performance	20%
Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	20%
Senior Exit Survey	8%
Senior Exit Exam	2%

Course Drop Policy: The last day to drop the course is March 28, 2016. After March 28, I will only sign a drop slip if you have one of the documented circumstances approved by the university to drop by petition. *Documented justification is required for dropping courses by petition.* Some examples of documented circumstances that may merit approval are: accident or illness, family emergency, or other circumstances beyond the student's control. The fact that you may not be doing well in the course *is not* a circumstance that will merit approval.

Attendance/Participation: Robust class discussion on daily readings is the goal. To incentivize reading of discussion material, each of you is required to come to class each day with a minimum of 2 typed discussion questions for the group. These discussion questions will be turned in each day and will count toward your participation score. If it is apparent that the readings are not being done prior to class, a short quiz will be instituted at the beginning of class each day. The quizzes will be designed so that if you have read the assigned readings, you should have no problem answering the questions. Quizzes, should they be necessary, will count toward your participation grade.

Discussion Leader: Each person will be responsible for leading and facilitating the daily class discussion twice over the course of the semester. Readings and dates will be assigned at random on the first day of class. You do have the option to trade your facilitation dates with someone else, but you need to inform me of any trades within the first two weeks of class. As the discussion leader, you should come to class with several prepared discussion questions on the readings for the day to help facilitate the class discussion.

In addition to leading the discussion, you will be responsible for developing and turning in 2 possible essay style exam questions related to the readings you are facilitating. For one of those questions, you must provide a well written essay answer. Each answer should be approximately 1 page (single spaced) in length. Your score for these assignments will be based on the content, quality, and creativity of the questions you present, your effectiveness in leading the class discussion, and on the quality of your 2 exam questions and answers.

Exams: There will be two exams. Exam questions will be essay style questions on the class readings. Exam questions will be largely drawn from the pool of potential exam questions submitted by the discussion leaders. ***Please bring a blue book to class for the two exam dates.***

Senior Exit Survey: The senior exit survey is an important survey tool that the Department of Economics uses to assess your experience as an undergraduate in Economics. You may sign your name or take it anonymously, but your grade for this will be dependent on your attendance on the Exit Survey day.

Senior Exit Exam: The senior exit exam is used as a valuable assessment tool for the Department of Economics to assess overall Economic knowledge of our graduating seniors. It is a comprehensive exam covering all UM undergraduate Economics courses.

A Word on Cheating and Plagiarism: Do not do it! All students are expected to abide by the University of Montana Student Conduct Code. Any violators of the Student Code of Conduct will be subject to punishment as outlined in the Student Code. For more information on the Student Code of Conduct please consult the following website:

http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php

Students with Disabilities: If you are a student with a disability who will require reasonable program modifications in this course, please meet with Disability Services for Students in Lommasson 154 for assistance in developing a plan to address program modifications. If you are already working with Disability Services, please arrange to meet with me during my office hours to discuss reasonable modifications that may be necessary. For more information, visit the Disability Services website at <http://www.umt.edu/disability> .

Classroom Policies: I reserve the right to ask you to leave the classroom for the day if I perceive that you are being disruptive in any way to me or others in class. I view disruptive behavior to include things like talking on a cell phone, texting, tweeting, emailing, surfing the web, reading a newspaper or doing crosswords puzzles during class time. *Cell phones must be put away (out of sight and ringers turned off) at all times.*

Reading List

1. Misbehaving: The Making of Behavioral Economics, by Richard Thaler, 2015.
2. Phishing for Phools: The Economics of Manipulation and Deception, by George Akerlof and Robert Shiller, 2015.
3. Who Gets What--and Why? The New Economics of Matchmaking and Market Design, by Alvin E. Roth, 2015.
4. Economics Rules: The Rights and Wrongs of the Dismal Science, by Dani Rodrik, 2015.

Class Schedule:

	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Week 1: 1/25 – 1/29	Introduction	<i>Career Discussion Day</i>	Thaler, Ch. 1-5
Week 2: 2/1 – 2/5	Thaler, Ch. 7-12	NO CLASS	NO CLASS
Week 3: 2/8 – 2/12	Thaler, Ch. 13-17	Thaler, Ch. 18-22	NO CLASS
Week 4: 2/15 – 2/19	President's Day – NO CLASS	Thaler, Ch. 23-27	Thaler, Ch. 28-30
Week 5: 2/22 – 2/26	Thaler, Ch. 31-Conclusion	NO CLASS	Akerlof & Shiller, Preface - Ch. 2
Week 6: 2/29 – 3/4	Akerlof & Shiller, Ch. 3-6	NO CLASS	Akerlof & Shiller, Ch. 7-10
Week 7: 3/7 – 3/11	Akerlof & Shiller, Ch. 11-Afterward	NO CLASS	Exam 1
Week 8: 3/14 -3/18	Roth, Ch.1-3	Roth, Ch.4-5	NO CLASS
Week 9: 3/21 – 3/25	NO CLASS	Roth, Ch.6-7	Roth, Ch.8-10
Week 10: 3/28 – 4/1	<i>Career Discussion Day Panel</i>	Roth, Ch.11-12	NO CLASS
Week 11: 4/4 – 4/8	NO CLASS (Spring Break)	NO CLASS (Spring Break)	NO CLASS (Spring Break)
Week 12: 4/11 – 4/15	NO CLASS	NO CLASS	NO CLASS
Week 13: 4/18 – 4/22	Rodrik, Intro-Ch.1	Senior Exit Exam	Rodrik, Ch. 2-3
Week 14: 4/25 – 4/29	NO CLASS	Rodrik, Ch. 4-6	Exam 2
Week 15: 5/2 – 5/6	Senior Exit Survey	NO CLASS	NO CLASS
Week 16: Starting 5/9	Finals Week --No Class		