

Contemporary US Economics - Discrimination  
NSH-209, Albany  
Fall Quarter 2018  
Tuesday & Thursday 1:00 – 2:20 P.M.  
CRN 26042

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Office Hours: T (11:30 – 12:30 P.M.) and Th (9:30 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.)

**TEXT & REQUIRED RESOURCES:**

Taking Sides: Clashing Views of Economic Issues, 17<sup>th</sup> 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:**

Lectures, student presentations, discussions, case studies, and videos.

This class is very interactive in nature. Several 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!

All students will come to class having read the assigned materials and be ready to discuss the issues of the week. There will be a daily quiz to assess your understanding of the material at the beginning of class. Obviously, these are not the only important economic issues that would be interesting to discuss. If there are additional issues that you wish to discuss, please contact me and we can incorporate them into the class.

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. If students do not volunteer input they will be called on in class.

## **DEBATES:**

In groups, students will present their chosen topics. The material presented will be from the text and information obtained outside of course materials. A 20 minute presentation for both the “yes” and “no” sides of the issues will be given (i.e. 40 minutes total to discuss both sides).

Students will be expected to present a well-thought-out review of the topic. Simply reading from the text will not be allowed. Please do not solely depend on the textbook. Many of the topics listed in the text, for example Obamacare, are in constant flux and will require outside reading to ensure that the information is current. To earn maximum credit, you will need to provide information from outside sources to fully defend your issue. Make sure you identify the source if you use it in class.

Each member will be graded individually on their presentation though the presentation should be coordinated. In other words, one student cannot give detailed information and another one just say “I agree.”

## **INDIVIDUAL WORK:**

Topic Reviews - Each student in the class will write an 800 - 1,000 word review on one of the topics presented during that week of class. These reviews will be due each Saturday during the term at 8:00 A.M. in Moodle. Each review should include the major points presented by the groups including both sides of the issue as well as your personal opinion on the subject. It is not enough to just say, “I agree with the presentation.” It is important that you explain why you agree or disagree with the information and topic.

No late work will be accepted. Please do not ask. You are accountable for 9 reviews (each from a different week of class).

Daily Quizzes – You will be given a daily quiz to determine your understanding of the assigned reading. Issue quizzes are closed book and will be given at the beginning of each class covering material in the reading indicated on the outline for that day. Therefore, students must complete their assigned reading before class. Late quizzes are not given, however, you may arrange to take quizzes early during office hours. Your lowest quiz grade will not be calculated in your final grade.

Final Exam – Your final exam will be an essay question where you will write a pro or con essay about a specific topic. Your instructor will provide you more information about the topic on the day of the final.

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

### **Group work:**

Debates (5 x 24 pts each)	120
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### **Individual work:**

Daily Reading Quizzes (18 x 10 pts each)	180
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Reviews (9 x 20 pts each)	180
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Final Exam	120
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<b>Total</b>	<b>600 Points</b>
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Tentative Outline by Date – EC220 for Fall Quarter 2018

Date	Lecture Topic
9/25	Course Introduction
9/27	<i>Issue 1:</i> Are Profits the Only Business of Business?
10/2	<i>Issue 2:</i> Should the Compensation of Executives Be Subject to Government Regulation?
10/4	<i>Issue 3:</i> Has the Supreme Court Made It Possible for Corporations to Buy Elections?
10/9	<i>Issue 4:</i> Should the United States Stop All New Offshore Drilling for Oil?
10/11	<i>Issue 5:</i> Are Taxes on Soda Effective in Reducing Obesity?
10/16	<i>Issue 6:</i> Should Uber be Heavily Regulated?
10/18	<i>Issue 7:</i> Is Obamacare a Disaster for the Economy?
10/23	<i>Issue 8:</i> Is Declining Productivity a Concern?
10/25	<i>Issue 9:</i> Do American Consumers Need a Financial Protection Agency?
10/30	<i>Issue 10:</i> Does Immigration Benefit the Economy?
11/1	<i>Issue 11:</i> Is a Fair Trade Policy Superior to a Free Trade Policy?
11/6	<i>Issue 12:</i> Is Climate Change a Threat that Requires Urgent Action?
11/8	<i>Issue 13:</i> Can U.S. Deficit and Debt Problems be Solved Without Increases in Taxes?
11/13	<i>Issue 14:</i> Is China's Currency Undervalued, and Should the United States Take Action to Correct This Undervaluation?
11/15	<i>Issue 15:</i> Should Marijuana be Legalized?
11/20	<i>Issue 16:</i> Is the Inequality in U.S. Income Distribution Surging?
11/27	Activity: TBD
11/29	Activity: TBD
12/4	<b>Final Exam – TBD</b>

**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.

**LBCC COMPREHENSIVE STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION**

LBCC prohibits unlawful discrimination based on race, color, religion, ethnicity, use of native language, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, marital status, disability, veteran status, age, or any other status protected under applicable federal, state, or local laws. For further information see Board Policy BP-1015. Title II, IX, & Section 504: Scott Rolen, CC-108, 541-917-4425; Lynne Cox, T-107B, 541-917-4806, LBCC, Albany, Oregon. To report: [linnbenton-advocate.symplicity.com/public\\_report](http://linnbenton-advocate.symplicity.com/public_report)

**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

**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.