



Department of Economics Course Outline

		Term:	Fall 2005
Course:	Economics 349 [The Economics of Social Problems]	Section:	01
Time:	TR 11:00 ? 12:15	Place:	ST 132
Instructor:	Dr. Ana Ferrer		
Office:	SS 436	Telephone:	(403) 220-4098
Office Hours:	TR 13:00-14:00 and by appointment. (These hours are subject to change.)	E-Mail:	TBA

Textbook(s):

Sharpe, et al, *Economics of Social Issues*, McGraw Hill Ryerson **[Recommended Text]**

A list of readings will be provided as part of a detailed course outline. Some of the readings can be downloaded from the class web page.

Book(s) on Reserve:

Schiller, *Economics of Poverty and Discrimination*, Prentice Hall
Miller, Benjamin and North, *The Economics of Public Issues*, Norton, 2001
Sharp, et al., *Economics of Social Issues*, Irwin/McGraw Hill, latest edition
Becker & Becker, *The Economics of Life*, McGraw Hill
Lowenstein & Elster, *Choice over Time*, Sage, 1992
Aaron, *Behavioral Dimension of Retirement Economics*, Russell Sage, 2000
Elster, *Addiction: Entries & Exits*, Russell Sage
Blau et al, *Economics of Women, Men & Work*, Prentice Hall
Frank, *Economics & Behavior*, McGraw Hill

Course Outline:

This course will use the tools of economic analysis to contribute to our knowledge of various social problems. Using the economic model of the rational agent, we will explore how individuals behave in social context and evaluate policies addressing the issues in question. There will be some emphasis on the workings of labour markets. Topics to be covered include income inequality and poverty, discrimination, crime and health care.

The following is a tentative list of the topics (and readings) we will be discussing. This is only a tentative schedule. If there are any topics you would like to see covered, please let me know.

- Some issues on Income Distribution and Poverty in developed countries.
- An Economic Model for the Determination of Income
- The Effects of Income Maintenance Schemes
- Wealth Distribution
- Aging, Health Care, and Pensions
- Discrimination
- Crime and Punishment
- Drugs and Addiction
- The Environment
- Poverty and Development

Grade Determination and Final Examination Details:

Final grades will be based on a midterm exam (30%, date to be announced), a final exam (40%, date set by the Registrar's office), problem sets (10%), and a term paper (20%). Late work will not be accepted under any circumstances.

Problem sets will be assigned throughout the term, involving the analysis of a specific problem using the methods developed in class. You are encouraged to work together on these problem sets, although each person must turn in their own assignment. Assignments will be graded on a pass/fail basis. Assignments will be collected in class and late assignments will not be accepted. I strongly recommend that you take the time to work through and understand the problem sets. Exams will be of a similar nature and, as such, the problem sets give you an opportunity to practice.

A term paper will comprise 20% of your final grade. You should choose a social problem of interest and analyze it using the tools discussed in class. All topics must be cleared with me by submitting a one page summary of your intended paper topic, by the middle of October. It does not need to be very detailed at this point, but you need to list at least two references you have consulted. If you find yourself having difficulty choosing a topic, please come by and we can find one of interest. The final draft must be typed, double-spaced, and include a list of your references. Due dates for the summary and final draft of the paper will be announced in class. Please feel free to meet with me to discuss the progress of your paper.

Tests and final exams are marked on a numerical (percentage) basis, and then converted to letter grades. The course grade is then calculated using the weights indicated above. As a guide to determining standing, these letter grade equivalences will generally apply:

A+	95-100	B	75-79	C-	55-59
A	90-94	B-	70-74	D+	50-54
A-	85-89	C+	65-69	D	45-49
B+	80-84	C	60-64	F	0-44

If, for some reason, the distribution of grades determined using the aforementioned conversion chart appears to be abnormal the instructor reserves the right to change the grade conversion chart if the instructor, *at the instructor's discretion*, feels it is necessary to more fairly represent student achievement.

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Society of Undergraduates in Economics (S.U.E.)

www.fp.ucalgary.ca/econ

Notes

- A passing grade on any particular component of the course is not required for a student to pass the course as a whole.
- Non-programmable calculators will be allowed during the writing of tests or final examinations.
- There will be a Registrar scheduled final examination, lasting 2 hours, in a classroom.
- Tests and exams WILL NOT involve multiple choice questions.
- Students seeking reappraisal of a piece of graded term work (term paper, essay, etc.) should discuss their work with the Instructor *within* fifteen days of the work being returned to the class.
- This course will make use of Blackboard - students who are registered in this course can log on at <http://blackboard@ucalgary.ca/webapps/login> . Please note that Blackboard features a class e-mail list that I will use. It is your responsibility to ensure that Blackboard uses the e-mail address of your choice. The default is your University of Calgary e-mail address

Safewalk / Campus Security: 220-5333

AF:pst

2005-08-10