

Syllabus
University of Oklahoma
Department of Economics
ECON 4983-001: Economics as Social Science
Fall 2022

Professor: Dr. Chunbei Wang

Office Location: Room 438 Cate Center 1

Email: chunbei.wang@ou.edu

Office Hours: On Zoom Wednesdays 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm, or by appointment.

Meeting ID: 925 0743 0909

Passcode: econwang

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://oklahoma.zoom.us/j/92507430909?pwd=T3J3MnpFS2ovVm dxUDE3Z0tONHJqUT09>

Learning Management System: canvas.ou.edu

Course Meeting Time and Location: TR 1:30 pm – 2:45 pm, Cate Center One 174

Course Prerequisite: Senior status, Economics major

COVID Safety Policy:

- 1. Mask wearing is encouraged in the classroom.**
- 2. Please do not come to class if you feel sick with any of the COVID symptoms, even if they are mild.**

Course Description:

This is a seminar-style capstone course for economics seniors, and **mainly takes the form of presentations, discussions, and writings**. The course consists of 2 parts.

- In the first part, you will be introduced to six topics related to behavior and social issues using Economic theories and Economics literature. During this process, you become familiar with how Economics can be applied to analyze social issues, Economics writing styles, and what is expected in a literature review paper. Two short papers are expected as practice writing assignments.
- In the second part, we will concentrate on making progress toward the final research paper – a literature review paper on a topic of your interest.

Course Goals:

The goal of this course is to showcase how to utilize economics knowledge to analyze various social issues and how to gain first-hand knowledge on scientific research. Since this is a capstone seminar course, it is not about lecturing new theories or methods, but about how to make use of what you have already learned in the economics major and to transition yourself into an independent learner. During this process, you will also hone your oral and written communication skills via regular in-class discussions, presentations, and writing practices.

Learning Outcomes:

- Reinforce the ability to apply economic theories and methods to analyze various social issues.
- Collect and synthesize academic literature to answer a question.
- Deepen the understanding of economic concepts and theories through oral and written communications.
- Enhance discussion and presentation skills.

Readings:

Readings will be provided on Canvas throughout the semester.

Requirements and Grading:

The course requirements include in-class discussions, discussion reports, Kahoot games, short papers, presentations, and a research paper. The weights in the final grade are assigned as follows:

In-class discussions	15%	Short papers	20%
Discussion reports	15%	Presentations	15%
Kahoot games	Extra Credits	Research paper	35%

Letter Grade Criteria

A	90-100	B	80-89	C	70-79	D	60-69	F	<60
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1. In-class discussions (15%)

Discussion is a skill that can be developed/sharpened through practice, and this class aims to offer plenty of opportunities for such practice. Grading will be based on willingness and readiness to participate and contributions to the discussions. While attendance is not required, please try to participate in the discussions whenever you do attend.

2. Discussion report (15%)

To facilitate classroom discussions, you will be provided with a discussion report with a few questions to answer. You will type up the answers and submit on Canvas before class and be ready to discuss them in class if you attend. Your lowest 2 grades will be dropped.

3. Kahoot Games (Extra Credits)

Kahoot games will be played every time we have a journal article reading. The days are listed on the schedule in the last page of the syllabus.

For each game, those who rank top 3 will receive 4 points of extra credits toward one of the course requirements, those who rank top 4-6 will receive 3 points, and those who answer at least 70% of the questions correctly will receive 2 points.

4. *Short Papers (20%)*

You will write two short papers to practice how to write a literature review paper. The first short paper is due after we finish the first three topics (Irrational behavior, Immigration, and Automation). You come up with a question to which you want to find the answer, find references in economics journals that directly answer that question, and write a short literature review to answer your question. The second short paper is due after we finish the next three topics (Discrimination, COVID pandemic, and Legalization of Marijuana).

Your research question(s) can be related to one of the six topics covered in class, or can be any other topic in which you are interested. You may think about what your final research project will be, and start working on that topic in these short papers so that you can use them later to build toward your final paper.

The short papers should be about 3 pages in main text (excluding references, figures, or tables), in Times New Roman font 12, double spaced. They should include at least 6 references that **directly** answer your research question, a paragraph of introduction that describes the research question of interest, three to four paragraphs of literature review synthesizing the literature, and one paragraph of conclusion.

Due to the large class size this semester, the short papers will be group projects, with each group consisting of three members. You may switch group for each short paper.

The lower grade is dropped conditional on both short papers being submitted.

5. *Presentations (15%)*

You will be asked to present your research a few times. These presentations will be graded based on preparation, slides, and presentation styles.

6. *Research Paper (35%)*

The research paper should be about 20 pages in main text (excluding references, figures, or tables), in Times New Roman font 12, double spaced. It should be a literature survey paper of a topic of your interest and discuss and synthesize at least 20 journal articles closely related to that topic.

Due to large class size, the research paper will be a group project, with each group consisting of two to three members.

Course Policies

Extra Credit Policy:

Extra credit opportunities, if provided, are available to all students to ensure fairness. *Individual* requests of extra credit opportunities will be denied.

Changes in the syllabus

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus if desirable or necessary and will inform you via email and in class.

University Policies

Academic Integrity:

All students are expected to conform to college-level standards of ethics, academic integrity, and academic honesty. By enrolling in this course, you agree to be bound by the Academic Misconduct Code published in The University of Oklahoma Student Code. <https://www.ou.edu/integrity>

All members of the community recognize the necessity of being honest with themselves and with others. Cheating in class, plagiarizing, lying and employing other modes of deceit diminish the integrity of the educational experience. None of these should be used as a strategy to obtain a false sense of success. The need for honest relations among all members of the community is essential.

Religious Observance:

It is the policy of the University to excuse the absences of students that result from religious observances and to reschedule examinations and additional required classwork that may fall on religious holidays, without penalty.

Reasonable Accommodation Policy:

The Accessibility and Disability Resource Center is committed to supporting students with disabilities to ensure that they are able to enjoy equal access to all components of their education. This includes your academics, housing, and community events. If you are experiencing a disability, a mental/medical health condition that has a significant impact on one or more life functions, you can receive accommodations to provide equal access. Possible disabilities include, but are not limited to, learning disabilities, AD(H)D, mental health, and chronic health. Additionally, we support students with temporary medical conditions (broken wrist, shoulder surgery, etc.) and pregnancy. To discuss potential accommodations, please contact the ADRC at 730 College Avenue, (ph.) 405.325.3852, or adrc@ou.edu.

Title IX Resources and Reporting Requirement:

Anyone who has been impacted by gender-based violence, including dating

violence, domestic violence, stalking, harassment, and sexual assault, deserves access to resources so that they are supported personally and academically. The University of Oklahoma is committed to offering resources to those impacted, including: speaking with someone confidentially about your options, medical attention, counseling, reporting, academic support, and safety plans. If you would like to speak with someone confidentially, please contact OU Advocates (available 24/7 at 405-615-0013) or another confidential resource (see “Can I make an anonymous report?”). You may also choose to report gender-based violence and discrimination through other means, including by contacting the Institutional Equity Office (ieo@ou.edu, 405-325-3546) or police (911). Because the University of Oklahoma is committed to the safety of you and other students, I, as well as other faculty, Graduate Assistants, and Teaching Assistants, are mandatory reporters. This means that we are obligated to report gender-based violence that has been disclosed to us to the Institutional Equity Office. This includes disclosures that occur in: class discussion, writing assignments, discussion boards, emails and during Student/Office Hours. For more information, please visit the Institutional Equity Office.

Adjustments for Pregnancy/Childbirth Related Issues:

Should you need modifications or adjustments to your course requirements because of documented pregnancy-related or childbirth-related issues, please contact your professor or the Accessibility and Disability Resource Center at 405/325-3852 as soon as possible. Also, see the Institutional Equity Office FAQ on Pregnant and Parenting Students’ Rights for answers to commonly asked questions.

Final Exam Preparation Period

Pre-finals week will be defined as the seven calendar days before the first day of finals. Faculty may cover new course material throughout this week. For specific provisions of the policy please refer to OU’s Final Exam Preparation Period policy.

Emergency Protocol:

During an emergency, there are official university procedures that will maximize your safety.

Severe Weather: If you receive an OU Alert to seek refuge or hear a tornado siren that signals severe weather.

1. Look for severe weather refuge location maps located inside most OU buildings near the entrances
2. Seek refuge inside a building. Do not leave one building to seek shelter in another building that you deem safer. If outside, get into the nearest building.
3. Go to the building’s severe weather refuge location. If you do not know where that is, go to the lowest level possible and seek refuge in an innermost room. Avoid outside doors and windows.

4. Get in, Get Down, Cover Up
5. Wait for official notice to resume normal activities. Additional Weather Safety Information is available through the Department of Campus Safety.

Armed Subject/Campus Intruder:

If you receive an OU Alert to shelter-in-place due to an active shooter or armed intruder situation or you hear what you perceive to be gunshots:

1. Avoid: If you believe you can get out of the area WITHOUT encountering the armed individual, move quickly towards the nearest building exit, move away from the building, and call 911.
2. Deny: If you cannot flee, move to an area that can be locked or barricaded, turn off lights, silence devices, spread out, and formulate a plan of attack if the shooter enters the room.
3. Defend: As a last resort fight to defend yourself. For more information, visit OU's Emergency Preparedness site.

Fire Alarm/General Emergency:

If you receive an OU Alert that there is danger inside or near the building, or the fire alarm inside the building activates:

1. LEAVE the building. Do not use the elevators.
2. KNOW at least two building exits
3. ASSIST those that may need help
4. PROCEED to the emergency assembly area
5. ONCE safely outside, NOTIFY first responders of anyone that may still be inside building due to mobility issues.
6. WAIT for official notice before attempting to re-enter the building.

Mental Health Support Services:

If you are experiencing any mental health issues that are impacting your academic performance, counseling is available at the University Counseling Center (UCC). The Center is located on the second floor of the Goddard Health Center, at 620 Elm Rm. 201, Norman, OK 73019. To schedule an appointment call (405) 325-2911. For more information, please visit University Counseling Center.

Readings:

I. Irrational Behavior

Ariely: Predictably Irrational, Revised and Expanded Edition: The Hidden Forces That Shape Our Decisions

Chapter 1: The Truth about Relativity

Chapter 2: The Fallacy of Supply and Demand

Chapter 3: The Cost of Zero Cost

Chapter 4: The Cost of Social Norms

Furnham, Adrian and Hua Chu Boo (2011) "A literature review of the anchoring effect," The Journal of Socio-Economics, 40: 35-42.

II. Immigration

Peri, Giovanni. (2016). "Immigrants, Productivity, and Labor Markets." Journal of Economic Perspectives. 30(4): 3-30.

III. Automation

Autor, David H. (2015) "Why Are There Still So Many Jobs? The History and Future of Workplace Automation." Journal of Economic Perspectives. 29(3): 3-30

IV. Discrimination

Neumark, David (2018) "Experimental Research on Labor Market Discrimination." Journal of Economic Literature. 56(3): 799-866.

V. COVID Pandemic

Find a paper of your interest that is related to this topic and that is published in an Economics journal. Be prepared to share in class.

VI. Legalization of Marijuana

Find a paper of your interest that is related to this topic and published in an Economics journal. Be prepared to share in class.

Tentative Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Assignment
1	Aug 23 T	Syllabus	
	Aug 25 Th	Introduction and Research Tools	
I. Irrational Behavior			
2	Aug 30 T	Discuss Ariely – Ch 1	Discussion report 1
	Sept 1 Th	Discuss Ariely – Ch 2~4	Discussion report 2
3	Sept 6 T	Furnham and Boo (2011) Kahoot Game 1	Discussion report 3
II. Immigration			
3	Sept 8 Th	Overview	
4	Sept 13 T	Peri (2016) Kahoot Game 2	Discussion report 4
III. Automation			
4	Sept 15 Th	Overview	
5	Sept 20 T	Autor (2015) Kahoot Game 3	Discussion report 5
	Sept 22 Th	Research Day	
6	Sept 27 T	Present your research	Short Paper 1 Due
	Sept 29 Th	Present your research	
7	Oct 4 T	Present your research	
IV. Discrimination			
7	Oct 6 Th	Overview	
8	Oct 11 T	Discuss Neumark (2018) Kahoot Game 4	Discussion report 6
V. COVID Pandemic			
8	Oct 13 Th	Overview	
9	Oct 18 T	Find a paper on this topic and share in class	Discussion report 7
VI. Legalization of Marijuana			
9	Oct 20 Th	Overview	
10	Oct 25 T	Find a paper on this topic and share in class	Discussion report 8
	Oct 27 Th	Research Day	
11	Nov 1 T	Present your research	Short Paper 2 Due
	Nov 3 Th	Present your research	
12	Nov 8 T	Present your research	
Progress toward Final Paper			
12	Nov 10 Th	Present Research Outline	Outline Due
13	Nov 15 T	Present Research Outline	
	Nov 17 Th	Research Day	
14	Nov 22 T	Research Day	
	Nov 24 Th	Thanksgiving Break	
15	Nov 29 T	Research Day	
	Dec 1 Th	Present Research Paper	Final Draft Due
16	Dec 6 T	Present Research Paper	
	Dec 8 Th	Present Research Paper	

Note: On research days we do not meet in class. I will be on Zoom for questions.