McGill University
Department of Economics

ECON 205-001

AN INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL ECONOMY

FALL 2019

Professor: Dr. Sandra Saghir
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Course Location: CURRIE 408/9
Course meeting times: Wednesdays & Fridays 10:05 AM – 11:25 AM

Office: Leacock 426
Office Hours: Wednesdays & Fridays 12:15 PM - 1:15 PM

Number of Credits: 3 credits

Course Prerequisites:
None

Course Restrictions:
- Not open to students who have taken ECON 205D.
- Does not count for credit toward the Minor or Major Concentrations or the Honours degree in Economics.

TA: The Teaching Assistant (TA) is Aritra Basu: aritra.basu@mail.mcgill.ca

You may contact him by email. He will also hold office hours every week during which he will help you work through problems and answer questions related to the course material. I shall post the office hours of the TA under “Announcements” on myCourse.

Communication: The TA should be your primary contact. You may come during my office hours for any issue you may have concerning the course. Any additional readings, information and important events/ exam dates will be posted on myCourses. You are responsible in checking it daily.
Course Overview:

This course offers a critical study of the insights to be gained through economic analysis of a number of problems of broad interest. The focus will be on the application of economics to issues of public policy.

Textbook


The print version is available for $60.00 CND while the e-Text is $39.99 USD.

The e-text version can be purchased online by clicking on the below link: https://bulk-store.vitalsource.com/products/economics-of-public-issues-the-roger-leroy-miller-daniel-k-v9780134532035

- Readings/articles will also be assigned during lecture and will be announced and shared on MyCourses.

Grading Scheme

Your grades this semester will be based on:

- In-class Exam I (30%) (Tentatively October 4)
- In-class Exam II (30%) (Tentatively November 1)
- In-class Final Exam (40%) (November 29)

Confirmed exam dates will be posted on myCourses. All examinations will be closed-note, closed book. There are no supplemental assignments and no make-up exams in this class.
1. **The Foundations of Economic Analysis**
   - Death by Bureaucrat (Ch.1)
   - Innovation (Ch.2)
   - Flying the Friendly Skies? (Ch.3)
   - The Mystery of Wealth (Ch.4)
   - The Economics of Exclusion (Ch.5)

2. **Supply and Demand**
   - Sex, Booze, and Drugs (Ch.6)
   - The Economics of Obesity (Ch.7)
   - Kidneys for Sale (Ch.8)
   - Are we Running out of Water (Ch.9)
   - Bankrupt Landlords, from Sea to Shining Sea (Ch.10)

3. **Labor Market**
   - Das Kapital in the Twenty-First Century (Ch.11)
   - (Why) Are Women Paid Less (Ch.12)
   - The Effects of Minimum Wage (Ch.13)
   - The (Dis)incentives of Higher Taxes (Ch.14)

4. **Market Structures**
   - The Platform Economy (Ch.15)
   - Contracts, Combinations, and Conspiracies (Ch.16)
   - Keeping the Competition out (Ch.18)

5. **Political Economy**
   - The Deception of Green Energy (Ch.20)
   - The Fight over Genetically Modified Foods (Ch.21)
   - Student Loans (Ch.22)
   - The Graying of America (Ch.23)

6. **Property Rights and The Environment**
   - What to Do About the Climate (Ch.25)
   - The Death of Recycling (Ch.28)

7. **Globalization and Economic Prosperity**
   - The Economics of the Big Mac (Ch.29)
   - The $750,000 Steelworker (Ch.31)
Required Official Statements

1. McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/for more information).

2. In accordance with McGill Universitys Charter of Students Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

3. Instructors who may adopt the use of text-matching software to verify the originality of students’ written course work must register for use of the software with Educational Technologies (Email) and must inform their students before the drop/add deadline, in writing, of the use of text-matching software in a course.

4. If you have a disability please contact the instructor to arrange a time to discuss your situation. It would be helpful if you contact the Office for Students with Disabilities at 514-398-6009 before you do this.

5. Additional policies governing academic issues which affect students can be found in the McGill Charter of Students’ Rights” (Chapter One of the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook available as a PDF on http://www.mcgill.ca/study/2010-2011/).

6. McGill University shall strive to be recognized as an environmentally safe and responsible institution, and as a model of environmentally responsible living.” (see Environmental Policy for McGill University)

7. In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the Universitys control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.