Spring 2013 EIU 4115G

Pop Culture Economics

Class Location: 2160 Coleman Hall Class Meeting: T R 9:30 am – 10:45 am

Office Hours: T R 10:45 am – 12:30 pm and by appointment

Instructor: Dr. Ahmed S. Abou-Zaid

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Required Text:

Grady Klein and Yoram Bauman, The Cartoon Introduction to Economics [Volume One: Microeconomics], 1st edition

Course Objective:

A study of the ways in which economics plays a role in individuals' lives as seen through the stories told in popular music, movies, and television programs. Students will explore how individuals, firms, governments, and society make decisions in attempt to achieve the greatest level of well-being possible in a world of limited resources.

Learning objectives:

- Examine the problem of scarcity in the world around us
- Learn the ways in which economists measure benefits and costs of activities
- Understand the role of incentives in shaping economic behavior
- Be able to explain why voluntary exchange benefits all parties and why is efficient
- Discuss the role of the government in correcting for market failures
- Examine the factors that determine standards of living around the world
- Discover the causes and consequences of unemployment and inflation in the economy
- Identify and discuss a scene from a movie or television show or the lyrics from a popular song to demonstrate an economic concept covered in the course

Grading:

Final grade will be comprised of:			Grade	Percentage range
•	short papers	25 percent	A	90 – 100
•	Midterm exam	25 percent		
•	Final exam	25 percent	В	80 - 89.9
•	Term Paper	5 percent	C	70 - 79.9
•	Presentation of Term Paper	10 percent	D	60 - 69.9
•	Class participation	10 percent	F	59.9 and below

1. Short papers

You will have to write a short paper for each chapter we cover.

- You have to submit it using **WebCT** (under "Assignments")
- Please submit your papers as **Word document attachments**.
- The name of the file attached should be: "Your name- SP-paper number.doc"
- The length of the paper should not exceed one page
- Topic of the paper: one economic issue (*what we discussed in class this week/chapter*) as understood and identified by you in a Pop Culture event
 - o Examples:
 - This week on TV/movies/radio I saw/heard "this" and it made me think of "this economic concept"
 - This week, "something happened" to me/my family/my friend that made me think of "this economic issue"
- The structure of the short paper should be
 - o Title of the paper
 - o Introduction: define the economic concept your story will cover (30%)
 - Describe the story as seen on TV / movie or personal experience (30%)
 - Explain why and how your story conveys the economic concept (40%)

2. Attendance and class participation

Regular attendance is necessary for you to understand the material covered in this course. Attendance and class participation are an explicit part of your grade (10 percent). **PLEASE BE ADVISED:** attendance alone is not enough to get a good grade for class participation.

3. Exams

You will have two ON LINE (WebCT) exams: one midterm and a final exam. The final exam is **not cumulative**. Each exam will consist of 50 multiple-choice questions, two short comments of comic strips, and one short essay. Each exam covers 4 chapters. Questions will be taken from lectures, class discussions, and the required textbook.

4. Term Paper

- The length of the papers should not exceed eight pages
- Topic of the paper: economic issues as understood and identified by you in a Pop Culture event (movie, TV show, stand-up comedy, song)
- The structure of the term paper should be
 - Title of the paper
 - Introduction: define the economic concept/concepts you will cover
 - Tell the story (lyrics of songs or describe the scene from the movie, TV show, or stand-up comedy)
 - Explain why and how your Pop Culture event conveys the economic concept
 - Conclusion

5. Term Paper Presentation

- It is a maximum 20 minutes **PowerPoint presentation** of your term paper in front of the entire class.
- The structure of your PowerPoint presentations should be:
 - o Title of your presentation (term paper title)
 - o List the economic concepts used in the presentation
 - o Show the movie/TV show/stand-up comedy clip
 - Or an animation of a song you are using for your term paper
 - Describe and explain any economic concepts present in your chosen clip (one economic concept per slide)
 - Conclusion

6. Other Important Information

- **Academic Integrity:** This course strictly adheres to the conditions established in the EUI Student Conduct Code. As a result, cheating will be dealt with harshly.
- **Cell Phones**: Please, **Switch off your cell phones** prior to the start of each lecture. Cell phones are not allowed to be used as calculators during exams.
- **Disability**: If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact me and the Coordinator of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.