

**Course Title:** Current Economic Problems

**Instructor:** Ali Jalali, Office: OSH 149, Email: ali.jalali@utah.edu

**Office Hours\*:** Tue: 3:30-4:30 PM, Thu: 1:00-2:00 PM.

**Textbook:** [1] *Post Keynesian Economics: New Foundations* (2014 paperback) Author: Marc Lavoie, Publisher: Edward Elgar. [2] *Economics of the Environment – selected readings* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.) Author: Robert N. Stavins, Publisher: W. W. Norton & Company.

**Prerequisites:** See University General Catalog: <http://www.catalog.utah.edu>

**Course Outline<sup>†</sup>:**

Introduction (Aug. 25 <sup>th</sup> )	.....	approx 2 days
Topic 1 [What is a business cycle?]	.....	approx 2 days
Topic 3 [Living wage debate and unemployment]	.....	approx 2 days
Topic 4 [Urban economic issues]	.....	approx 2 days
Topic 5 [What’s wrong with inequality?]	.....	approx 2 days
Review (Oct. 6 <sup>th</sup> )	.....	approx 2 days
First Exam (Oct. 8 <sup>th</sup> )	.....	1 day
Review Exam	.....	approx 1 days
Topic 7 [What is a public good?]	.....	approx 2 days
Topic 8 [Social costs and externalities]	.....	approx 2 days
Topic 2 [Environment and climate change]	.....	approx 2 days
Topic 3 [Free trade debate]	.....	approx 2 day
Topic 4 [What’s going on in Greece?]	.....	approx 2 day
Topic 5 [Open Topic]	.....	approx 2 days
Review (Dec. 10 <sup>th</sup> )	.....	approx 1 day
Final Exam (Wednesday, Dec. 16 <sup>th</sup> : 1:00-3:00 PM)	.....	1 day

**Grading & Policy:** Course grades will be determined by a weighted average of the following: Class Participation [10%], First Exam (25%), Essay (25%), Final Exam (40%).

**Course Description:** A focus on central problems in the domestic and world economy, with an emphasis on continuing problems, such as unemployment, growth, economic crises, environmental issues, living wage debates and industrial trade policy. Up-to-the-minute issues and the health of the current economy as well as any surprise developments in the global economy will be given critical attention. Therefore, course content may develop and change as economic events of importance

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<sup>†</sup>The 'Course Outline' is tentative and subject to change. We may or may not cover all topics listed.

\*If the scheduled office hours conflict with your course schedule, you are encouraged to email me in advance (minimum 24hrs prior) to set up an appointment.

arise. An important component/objective of the course will be to develop students' critical thinking capacity and the ability to apply opposing perspectives in analyzing economic problems.

**Course objective:** This course is meant to introduce the student to a variety of topics or problems that economists are currently concerned with and to gain an elementary understanding the economic tools and ideas regularly applied to such problems. The course will aim to be 50% lecture and 50% discussion. Constructive debates through directed discussion led by the instructor along with the use of a variety of resources for each topic, including academic articles, news articles, reputable blogs and our texts will be utilized. The course will not conform to the traditional presentation of the material in the assigned texts, rather, the texts are used as a reference to inform our in-class discussion.

**Academic Conduct:** As a University of Utah student, you have agreed to abide by the University's academic policy [Policy 6-400: Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities], the Student Code of Conduct and the University's Scholastic Standards. All academic work and behavior must meet the standards described in the Student Code and the Scholastic Standards found at: <http://www.deanofstudents.utah.edu/conduct> and <http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php> Lack of knowledge of the Student Code is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the Scholastic Standards should be directed to the instructor.

**Extra Help:** Do not hesitate to come to my office during office hours or by appointment to discuss a homework problem or any aspect of the course. You also may want to consider the ASUU tutoring services. Information is available at: <http://www.tutoringcenter.utah.edu>. If you need writing assistance, you are encouraged to visit the University Writing Center. The Writing Center is located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Marriott Library in room 1171. For more information visit: <http://www.writingcenter.utah.edu>.

**Students with Disabilities:** The Department of Economics is dedicated in providing equal opportunities for success and reasonable accommodations to Disabled Students as guided by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and University policy. The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, (801) 581-5020. CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in an alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services. Please visit the Center for Disability Services' website for more information: <http://www.disability.utah.edu>.

**Addressing Sexual Misconduct:** Please read the following University statement on Sexual Misconduct: "Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a civil rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veterans status or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and

Affirmative Action, 135 Park Building, 801-581-8365, or the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066. For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, 426 SSB, 801-581-7776. To report to the police, contact the Department of Public Safety, 801-585-2677(COPS).”

**Attendance Policy:** Students are expected to attend classes regularly. A student who incurs an excessive number of absences without prior notification or medical documentation may be withdrawn from the course at the discretion of the Instructor or receive an incomplete.

**Important Dates:**

Class Begins .....	August 24
Class Ends .....	December 10
First Exam .....	October 8
Fall Break .....	October 11-18
Holiday .....	November 26
Essay Deadline .....	December 1 or 3
Final Exam Period .....	December 14-18