

ECONOMICS

Overview & Learning Goals

Overview

The major in economics is designed for students who wish to obtain a systematic introduction to the theoretical and empirical techniques of economics. It provides an opportunity to learn economics as a social science, to study the process of drawing inferences from bodies of data and testing hypotheses against observation, and to apply economic theory to particular social problems. Such problems include economic development, the functioning of economic institutions (i.e., financial markets, labor markets, corporations, government agencies), and current policy issues (i.e., the federal budget, poverty, the environment, globalization, deregulation). The major is a useful preparation for graduate study in economics, law, business, finance, or public administration, but majors have also gone on to medicine, environmental policy, education, and many other fields.

Learning Goals

The following are main learning goals for students of economics at Bowdoin College. While these goals are targeted toward majors, they also apply to students pursuing the minor in economics and the minor in economics and finance.

In addition to majors and minors, the economics department serves other constituencies at the College: those interested primarily in satisfying their MCSR requirement; those interested in obtaining a baseline level of economic literacy to complement the rest of their liberal arts education; and those taking economics courses as an explicit part (core course or elective) of another course of study. Many, but perhaps not all, of the goals presented below apply to these other student groups as well.

Goal 1: Demonstrate understanding of the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, basic research findings, and methods in economics.

Breadth in the discipline is accomplished through ECON 1050 Principles of Microeconomics and Quantitative Reasoning or ECON 1101 Principles of Microeconomics and ECON 1102 Principles of Macroeconomics, and in three core classes: ECON 2555 Microeconomics, ECON 2556 Macroeconomics, and ECON 2557 Economic Statistics. In addition, majors are required to complete four topics courses, three at the advanced level. The advanced-level courses provide depth in a particular topic, ask students to more rigorously apply some of the analytical tools first introduced in the core classes, and, in many cases, require students to write a long research paper. The minor is much more about breadth than depth. Still, each minor is exposed to all the introductory material, one intermediate-level theory course, one statistics course (not necessarily in economics), and one or two applied courses.

Goal 2: Apply principles of economics to conceptually understand behavior of individuals, households, firms, nongovernmental organizations, and governments in the real world.

This goal is achieved in introductory courses (ECON 1101 Principles of Microeconomics and ECON 1102 Principles of Macroeconomics), which many students take to gain “economic literacy,” as well as in our intermediate elective courses. This goal is also present in advanced classes.

Goal 3: Use algebraic, graphical, and numerical tools to build “models,” i.e., simplified representations of individual, firm, and government incentives and behaviors that affect the allocation of scarce resources.

The use of theoretical models is central to the methodology of economics, and modeling figures prominently even in economics introductory courses. In core courses, more sophisticated models using calculus are developed. The tools developed in the introductory and core courses are used in intermediate and upper-level electives, respectively, in the construction of more context-specific models. In addition, students in intermediate and upper-level electives and in ECON 2557 Economic Statistics are introduced to methods that allow economists to estimate or calibrate the models with data.

Goal 4: Articulate economic arguments using a range of “modalities”: verbal, graphical, algebraic/mathematical, and numerical.

This goal is addressed in all economics courses, starting with ECON 1101 Principles of Microeconomics and ECON 1102 Principles of Macroeconomics. Intermediate and advanced electives emphasize verbal arguments to a greater extent; introductory and core courses focus more on graphical and algebraic tools and the ability to numerically characterize outcomes. Advanced courses employ more sophisticated mathematical methods, such as constrained optimization, control theory, etc.

Goal 5: Communicate effectively both orally and through writing to transmit information and to construct a cogent argument.

This goal is addressed primarily in economics seminar courses, which all include a significant research paper. Many intermediate-level courses also have students synthesize and critique economic arguments in the popular press and other nontechnical publications. In many intermediate-level electives and advanced seminars, students are required to make oral presentations to the class.

Goal 6: Acquire skills to empirically test economic hypotheses and otherwise extract insight from data; understand the distinction between causation and spurious correlation.

This goal is addressed primarily in the ECON 2557 Economic Statistics core course and ECON 3516 Econometrics, but also in some elective courses. Students in many upper-level seminars employ statistical methods in a limited context and interpret the empirical results presented in the peer-reviewed literature. Many independent studies and honors students in economics include a significant empirical/statistical component in their work.

Goal 7: Utilize economic reasoning to assess the impacts of different policies and to understand how the perspective of economics can illuminate current events and policy debates.

The analysis of policy begins in economics introductory courses, where students develop simple models of the intervention of government in markets (e.g., taxation and price controls in ECON 1101 Principles of Microeconomics; monetary and fiscal policies in ECON 1102 Principles of Macroeconomics). Core micro- and macroeconomics courses carry out similar analysis with higher technical sophistication. Several elective courses are also offered that emphasize policy solutions to address market failure and achieve distributional goals, e.g., ECON 2001 Economic Policy, ECON 2218 Environmental Economics and Policy, ECON 2228 Natural Resource Economics and Policy, and ECON 3511 Economic Evaluation of Public Programs.

Goal 8: Understand both the usefulness and the limitations of economic methodology, as well as the assumed values (and perhaps “biases”) implicit in economic modeling approaches. Understand the difference between positive and normative statements. Understand and articulate the distinctions between economics and other social science fields, as well as the ways these fields can jointly enhance understanding of human systems.

Introductory and theory courses firmly emphasize the scientific nature of economics, i.e., its emphasis on positive/testable characterizations and predictions of human behavior rather than normative assertions. Throughout the curriculum, the potential benefits of economic tools are emphasized, but also advocate “disciplinary humility.” While some courses are more inherently interdisciplinary than others (e.g., ECON 3518 Environmental and Natural Resource Economics, ECON 2227 Human Resources and Economic Development), and others emphasize critique of orthodox economic-modeling frameworks (e.g., ECON 2221 Marxian Political Economy), virtually all courses stress that economic tools provide just one of many different valuable perspectives from which to understand human behavior and approach complex issues.

Goal 9: Understand the economic research process at the level of the peer-reviewed academic literature and evaluate its methods, findings, and conclusions; develop an ability to compare, critique, and understand connections between research findings in the peer-reviewed literature.

While students in any of the department’s courses may be asked to read academic literature in economics, this goal is most consistently addressed by students in advanced courses. Seminar courses all include a culminating research project that requires in-depth engagement with the primary academic literature in economics.

Goal 10: Give students interested in the graduate study of economics the tools and knowledge necessary to be accepted at a top economics department.

The department’s upper-level courses provide much of this background, acquaint students with the peer-reviewed literature, have them produce their own research project, and give them insights into their faculty member’s own research in a particular field of economics. Many of the students interested in graduate school undertake an honors project. Faculty also mentor those students interested in going on to graduate school; other relevant information is available on the departmental web page.

Department/Program Website (<https://www.bowdoin.edu/economics/>)

Faculty

Erik Nelson, *Department Chair*

Elizabeth Weston, *Department Coordinator*

Professors: Rachel Connelly, Deborah S. DeGraff, John M. Fitzgerald, Jonathan P. Goldstein*, Guillermo E. Herrera, B. Zorina Khan

Associate Professors: Gregory P. DeCoster, Stephen Meardon, Erik Nelson, Daniel F. Stone‡

Assistant Professors: Matthew J. Botsch, Jessica LaVoice, Stephen Morris, Gonca Senel

Faculty/Staff Website (<https://www.bowdoin.edu/economics/faculty-and-staff/>)

Requirements Economics Major

There are seven required courses for the major.

Code	Title	Credits
Required Courses		
Core		
ECON 2555	Microeconomics	1
ECON 2556	Macroeconomics	1
ECON 2557	Economic Statistics	1
Select three advanced topics courses numbered in the 3000s, at least one of which must be designated as a seminar (course number higher than 3500).		3
Select one additional course in economics numbered 2000 or higher.		1

Either ECON 1050 Principles of Microeconomics and Quantitative Reasoning or ECON 1101 Principles of Microeconomics serve as prerequisites for ECON 1102 Principles of Macroeconomics and, because these are prerequisites for most other economics courses, most students begin their work in economics with these introductory courses. Prospective majors are encouraged to take at least one core course by the end of the sophomore year, and all three core courses should be completed by the end of the junior year. Advanced topics courses have one or more of ECON 2555 Microeconomics, ECON 2556 Macroeconomics, and ECON 2557 Economic Statistics as prerequisites.

All prospective majors and minors are required to complete MATH 1600 Differential Calculus or its equivalent prior to enrolling in the core courses. (A math placement into MATH 1700 Integral Calculus or higher counts as satisfying the MATH 1600 Differential Calculus requirement.)

Economics Minor

Code	Title	Credits
Required Courses		
ECON 2555	Microeconomics	1
or ECON 2556	Macroeconomics	
Select two additional elective courses numbered 2000 or higher.		2
Select one of the following: ^a		1
ECON 2557	Economic Statistics	
MATH 1300	Biostatistics	
MATH 1400	Statistics in the Sciences	
MATH 2606	Statistics	
PSYC 2520	Data Analysis	
a score of four or five on the Advanced Placement Statistics exam		

^a Of this list, only ECON 2557 Economic Statistics can simultaneously satisfy the elective requirement.

Economics and Finance Minor

Code	Title	Credits
Required Courses		
ECON 2555	Microeconomics	1
ECON 3401	Financial Economics	1
One upper division course from ECON 2556, 2557, or 3000–4001 ^b		1

One course in the finance range: ECON 2400–2499, 3402–3499, or 3600–3699^b 1

Select one of the following:^c 1

ECON 2557	Economic Statistics
MATH 1300	Biostatistics
MATH 1400	Statistics in the Sciences
MATH 2606	Statistics
PSYC 2520	Data Analysis
a score of four or five on the Advanced Placement Statistics exam	

- b One elective may fulfill both the upper division and finance requirements. If a student uses one course to fulfill both requirements, the student is required to take another elective numbered 2000 or above.
- c Of this list, only ECON 2557 Economic Statistics can simultaneously satisfy the upper division and this requirement.

Because ECON 2555 Microeconomics is a prerequisite for ECON 3401 Financial Economics and other upper-level economics courses, prospective minors are encouraged to complete ECON 2555 Microeconomics by the end of their sophomore year.

Interdisciplinary Major

The department participates in an interdisciplinary major in mathematics and economics. See the Interdisciplinary Majors (<https://bowdoin-public.courseleaf.com/departments-programs/interdisciplinary-majors/>).

Additional Information

Additional Information and Department Policies

- Normally, no more than two courses taken at another college or university may be counted toward economics major or minor requirements with departmental approval.
- Economic courses numbered 1000 to 1099 (with the exception of ECON 1050 Principles of Microeconomics and Quantitative Reasoning) do not fulfill departmental requirements or serve as prerequisites for higher-level courses.
- An independent study can be used to satisfy no more than one major requirement; an intermediate independent study can satisfy a 2000-level elective, or an advanced independent study can satisfy a 3000-level non-seminar.
- Similarly, an independent study can be used to satisfy no more than one elective course requirement in either the economics minor or the economics and finance minor.
- To fulfill major or minor requirements, courses must be taken for letter grades and a C- or better must be earned.
- In order for a course to serve as a prerequisite for a required course, students must earn a C- or better, or Credit.
- Economics majors cannot also minor in economics or economics and finance.
- The statistics courses that count toward the minors that are from outside economics may double-count toward the economics minors.
- Students who aspire to advanced work in economics, e.g., an honors thesis and/or graduate study in a discipline related to economics, are strongly encouraged to master multivariate calculus (MATH 1800 Multivariate Calculus) and linear algebra (MATH 2000 Linear Algebra) early in their careers. Such students are also

encouraged to take MATH 2606 Statistics instead of ECON 2557 Economic Statistics as a prerequisite for ECON 3516 Econometrics. The ECON 2557 Economic Statistics requirement is waived for students who complete MATH 2606 Statistics and ECON 3516 Econometrics. Students should consult the Department of Economics about other mathematics courses that are especially useful for advanced study in economics.

Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate (AP/IB)

Students who received a score of four or five on the Microeconomics AP exam are eligible to receive credit for ECON 1101 Principles of Microeconomics, and students who received a score of four or five on the Macroeconomics AP exam are eligible to receive credit for ECON 1102 Principles of Macroeconomics. Students who received a minimum score of six on the Economics IB exam are eligible for placement into courses requiring either ECON 1101 Principles of Microeconomics and/or ECON 1102 Principles of Macroeconomics, and will receive one general credit. Students who received a score of four or five on the Statistics AP exam have the option to use that score to satisfy the statistics requirement for either minor. In order to receive credit for AP/IB work, students must have their scores officially reported to the Office of the Registrar by the end of their sophomore year at Bowdoin and must not also have taken ECON 1101 Principles of Microeconomics or ECON 1102 Principles of Macroeconomics respectively.

Courses

ECON 1013 (b) The Moral Economy

Stephen Meardon.

Non-Standard Rotation. Fall 2020. Enrollment limit: 16.

An examination of the moral questions arising from economic analysis during the industrial revolution. Readings include original texts by Adam Smith, Karl Marx, and Henry George, and historical treatments of their lives and circumstances; also the late nineteenth century fictional treatment of novelist and editor William Dean Howells. The authors' rhetorical strategies as well as their moral premises and political-economic ideas will be studied.

ECON 1018 (b) The Art of the Deal: Commerce and Culture

Zorina Khan.

Non-Standard Rotation. Fall 2020. Enrollment limit: 16.

Explores the economics of culture, including the analysis of markets for art, music, literature, and movies. If culture is priceless, then why do artists starve while providers of pet food make billions? Why are paintings by dead artists generally worth more than paintings by living artists? Could music piracy on the information superhighway benefit society? Can Tom Hanks turn a terrible movie into a contender at the box office? Students are not required to have any prior knowledge of economics, and will not be allowed to argue that baseball comprises culture.

Previous terms offered: Fall 2017, Fall 2016.

ECON 1050 (b, MCSR) Principles of Microeconomics and Quantitative Reasoning

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 35.

A quantitative reasoning supported introduction to economic analysis and institutions, with special emphasis on the allocation of resources through markets. Covers the same content as Economics 1101 with added instruction in the quantitative skills used in modern microeconomics, providing a firm foundation for further coursework in economics. Students desiring a comprehensive introduction to economic reasoning should take both this course (or Economics 1101) and 1102. To ensure proper placement, students must fill out economics department placement form and must be recommended for placement in Economics 1050. Not open to students have taken Economics 1101.

Prerequisites: MATH 1050 or Placement in ECON 1050.

Previous terms offered: Fall 2019, Fall 2018, Fall 2017, Fall 2016.

ECON 1082 (b) Economic Literacy

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 50.

A nontechnical introduction to the operation of modern capitalist economies, with a focus on the US. The course is intended to provide a level of economic literacy adequate to understand economic policy debates as conducted in the popular press. The emphasis is on using a small number of fundamental concepts to clarify how economies function, and to provide a foundation for informed evaluation of competing economic policy agendas. Topics include incentives; decision-making; markets as a means of allocating resources; characteristics of market allocation; measures and history of US economic performance; international trade, finance, and globalization; and structure and function of the monetary and financial systems. Throughout the course, discussion will address alternative perspectives on the appropriate role of government in the economy. Not open to students who have credit for Economics 1050, 1101, or 1102. Does not satisfy the prerequisite for any other course in economics. (NOTE: this course was previously offered as Economics 100 Introduction to the Economy)

Previous terms offered: Spring 2020.

ECON 1101 (b, MCSR) Principles of Microeconomics

Jessica LaVoice; Zorina Khan; Rachel Connelly.
Every Semester. Fall 2020. Enrollment limit: 35.

An introduction to economic analysis and institutions, with special emphasis on the allocation of resources through markets. The theory of demand, supply, cost, and market structure is developed and then applied to problems in antitrust policy, environmental quality, energy, education, health, the role of the corporation in society, income distribution, and poverty. Students desiring a comprehensive introduction to economic reasoning should take both Economics 1101 and 1102. For proper placement students should fill out the economics placement request form and must be recommended for placement in Economics 1101. Not open to students who have taken Economics 1050.

Prerequisites: MATH 1050 or Placement in ECON 1101.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2020, Fall 2019, Spring 2019, Fall 2018, Spring 2018, Fall 2017, Spring 2017, Fall 2016.

ECON 1102 (b, MCSR) Principles of Macroeconomics

Stephen Morris.

Every Semester. Fall 2020. Enrollment limit: 35.

An introduction to economic analysis and institutions, with special emphasis on determinants of the level of national income, prices, and employment. Current problems of inflation and unemployment are explored with the aid of such analysis, and alternative views of the effectiveness of fiscal, monetary, and other governmental policies are analyzed. Attention is given to the sources and consequences of economic growth and to the nature and significance of international linkages through goods and capital markets.

Prerequisites: ECON 1050 or ECON 1101 or Placement in ECON 1102 or Placement in earned ECON 1101.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2020, Fall 2019, Spring 2019, Fall 2018, Spring 2018, Fall 2017, Spring 2017, Fall 2016.

ECON 2001 (b) Economic Policy

Gregory DeCoster.

Every Year. Fall 2020. Enrollment limit: 35.

Economic analysis can bring clarity to confused and contentious policy debates. Focuses on using economic analysis to anticipate the potential consequences of implementing major policy proposals, including those relating to globalization, international trade and finance, inequality of income and wealth, economic growth and development, the financial system, the government budget and debt, price stability and employment, and the environment.

Prerequisites: ECON 1050 or ECON 1101 or Placement in earned ECON 1101 or Placement in ECON 2000 Level.

Previous terms offered: Fall 2019, Fall 2018, Fall 2016.

ECON 2201 (b, IP, MCSR) International Economics

Every Other Year. Enrollment limit: 35.

Explores classical and modern theories of international trade and international finance and applies them to contemporary in the global marketplace. Considers policy implications of both trade and the regulation of trade on topics including financial gains from trade, balance of payments, international monetary regimes, and exchange rate policies.

Prerequisites: Two of: either ECON 1101 or ECON 1050 and ECON 1102.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2019.

ECON 2210 (b) Economics of the Public Sector

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 35.

Theoretical and applied evaluation of government activities and the role of government in the economy. Topics include public goods, public choice, income redistribution, benefit-cost analysis, health care, social security, and incidence and behavioral effects of taxation. Not open to students who have credit for Economics 3510.

Prerequisites: Two of: either ECON 1050 or ECON 1101 or Placement in earned ECON 1101 or Placement in ECON 2000 Level and ECON 1102 or Placement in earned ECON 1102 or Placement in ECON 2000 Level.

Previous terms offered: Fall 2018, Fall 2017, Fall 2016.

ECON 2212 (b, MCSR) Labor and Human Resource Economics

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 35.

A study of labor market supply and demand, with special emphasis on human resource policies, human capital formation, and wage inequality.

Prerequisites: ECON 1050 or ECON 1110 or Placement in earned ECON 1101 or Placement in ECON 2000 Level.

Previous terms offered: Fall 2017.

ECON 2213 (b) History of Economic Thought

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 35.

A historical study of insights and methods of inquiry into the functions of markets and the role of government in shaping them. Readings include the original works of economic thinkers from the eighteenth to twentieth centuries, including Adam Smith, David Ricardo, Henry Carey, Karl Marx, Henry George, Thorstein Veblen, and John Maynard Keynes, among others. Different historiographical approaches are employed, including examination of the problems motivating past thinkers as well as the relevance of their ideas to modern economics.

Prerequisites: Two of: either ECON 1050 or ECON 1101 or Placement in earned ECON 1101 or Placement in ECON 2000 Level and ECON 1102 or Placement in earned ECON 1102 or Placement in ECON 2000 Level.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2020.

ECON 2214 (b, MCSR) Topics in Public Finance

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 35.

Provides an overview of some of the major issues confronting public finance. Topics may include environmental policy, education, poverty, income inequality, taxation, crime, corruption, and public health, with examples drawn from the US as well as other industrialized and developing countries. Students read and critically evaluate journal articles that present empirical evidence on important public policy questions providing an opportunity to understand economics as a social science and to apply economic theory to particular social problems. Using statistical methodology and empirical evidence, students learn how to build statistical models and interpret results from reading the tables.

Prerequisites: ECON 1050 or ECON 1101 or Placement in earned ECON 1101 or Placement in ECON 2000 Level.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2018.

ECON 2218 (b, MCSR) Environmental Economics and Policy

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 35.

An exploration of environmental degradation and public policy responses in industrial economies. Market failures, property rights, and materialistic values are investigated as causes of pollution and deteriorating ecosystem functions. Guidelines for equitable and cost-effective environmental policy are explored, with an emphasis on the roles and limitations of cost-benefit analysis and techniques for estimating non-monetary values. Three core themes are the transition from "command and control" to incentive-based policies; the evolution from piecemeal regulation to comprehensive "green plans" (as in the Netherlands); and the connections among air pollution, energy systems, and global warming. (Same as: ENVS 2302)

Prerequisites: ECON 1050 or ECON 1101 or Placement in ECON 1102 or Placement in earned ECON 1101 or Placement in ECON 2000 Level.

Previous terms offered: Fall 2017.

ECON 2219 (b, MCSR) Institutional Approaches to Climate Change

Every Other Fall. Enrollment limit: 35.

How do various public and private institutions, including governments, firms, and nonprofits, incorporate climate change into their decision-making? Explores how and why institutions set greenhouse gas mitigation goals, how they propose to achieve their goals, and the larger economic and social implications of institutional climate action plans. Further, questions how institutions at all levels are adapting or planning to adapt to climate change. Critiques the efficacy and efficiency of climate action plans. Topics explored include renewable energy credit and offset markets; energy markets; carbon markets and taxes; financing of climate action plans; incentivizing energy efficiency and other climate-friendly practices; technology adoption; the economics of technological change; employee, student, and citizen activism; shareholder activism; and corporate social responsibility. Introduction to basic economic modeling by working with graphs, tables, and schematics. Problem sets and written assignments used to assess learning. For a final project, students write a climate action plan for an institution of their choice. (Same as: ENVS 2351)

Prerequisites: Two of: either ECON 1050 or ECON 1101 or Placement in earned ECON 1101 or Placement in ECON 2000 Level and ENVS 1101.

Previous terms offered: Fall 2018.

ECON 2221 (b, ESD, MCSR) Marxian Political Economy

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 35.

An examination of Karl Marx's method of analysis of capitalist market economies, focusing on the interconnected roles played by market relations, class/power relations, exploitation, and internal tendencies towards growth, crisis, and qualitative change. Students are introduced to Marxian method and economic theory through the original works of Marx, including Volume I of "Capital," and secondary works of contemporary and later critics. Historical and biographical sources are studied to illuminate Marx's inspirations and motives. Subsequently, applications of the Marxian framework to the modern capitalist economy are considered critically, with an emphasis on the secular and cyclical instability of the economy, changing institutional structures, labor market issues, and globalization.

Prerequisites: ECON 1050 or ECON 1100 or ECON 1101 or Placement in earned ECON 1101.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2019, Spring 2017.

ECON 2227 (b, IP, MCSR) Human Resources and Economic Development

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 35.

An analysis of human resource issues in the context of developing countries. Topics include the composition of the labor force by age and gender, productivity of the labor force, unemployment and informal sector employment, child labor and the health and schooling of children, and the effects of structural adjustment policies and other policy interventions on the development and utilization of human resources. Examples from selected African, Asian, and Latin American countries are integrated throughout and the interaction of sociocultural environments with economic forces is considered.

Prerequisites: ECON 1050 or ECON 1101 or Placement in earned ECON 1101 or Placement in ECON 2000 Level.

Previous terms offered: Fall 2016.

ECON 2228 (b, MCSR) Natural Resource Economics and Policy

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 35.

A study of the economic issues surrounding the existence and use of renewable natural resources (e.g., forestry/land use, fisheries, water, ecosystems, and the effectiveness of antibiotics) and exhaustible resources (such as minerals, fossil fuels, and old growth forest). A basic framework is first developed for determining economically efficient use of resources over time, then extended to consider objectives other than efficiency, as well as the distinguishing biological, ecological, physical, political, and social attributes of each resource. Uncertainty, common property, and various regulatory instruments are discussed, as well as alternatives to government intervention and/or privatization. (Same as: ENVS 2303)

Prerequisites: ECON 1050 or ECON 1101 or Placement in earned ECON 1101 or Placement in ECON 2000 Level.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2020, Spring 2018, Spring 2017.

ECON 2244 (b) The Economics of Sports

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 35.

An analysis of the economic issues in professional and amateur sports. Topics include the industrial organization of sports leagues (monopoly, antitrust, price discrimination, competitive balance), the public financing of sports, the labor economics of sports including discrimination, sports in the non-profit sector, in-game strategy, performance metrics, and behavioral decision theory. Uses the tools of microeconomic analysis including game theory and basic econometric analysis. Emerging issues in sports analysis may be explored, such as the impact of youth participation in sports on household economics, in-game referee bias, and the role of luck in sport outcomes.

Prerequisites: ECON 1050 or ECON 1101 or Placement in ECON 1102 or Placement in earned ECON 1101.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2017.

ECON 2304 (b, IP, MCSR) Economics of the European Union

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 35.

Focuses on the core economic aspects of the EU integration while taking into account historical and political influences. Major contemporary macroeconomic issues like monetary unification, fiscal policy in a monetary union, theory of customs unions, labor markets and migration, and financial markets and EU crises analyzed through theoretical approaches and empirical evidence.

Prerequisites: Two of: either ECON 1050 or ECON 1101 or Placement in earned ECON 1101 or Placement in ECON 2000 Level and ECON 1102 or Placement in earned ECON 1102 or Placement in ECON 2000 Level.

Previous terms offered: Fall 2019, Spring 2017, Fall 2016.

ECON 2323 (b, MCSR) The Economics of Information, Uncertainty, and Communication

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 35.

Many standard economic models assume perfect and complete information. This course explores how economic and social phenomena can be better understood by relaxing this assumption. Topics include Bayesian updating, decision-making under uncertainty, risk preferences, adverse selection, moral hazard, signaling, cheap talk, strategic disclosure, the efficient market hypothesis, advertising, media, and social learning. Develops and uses selected tools from probability theory and game theory.

Prerequisites: ECON 1050 or ECON 1101 or Placement in earned ECON 1101 or Placement in ECON 2000 Level.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2019, Spring 2017.

ECON 2380 (b, MCSR) Economic History of American Enterprise

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 35.

Considers the history of American enterprise over the past two centuries. First examines key issues in the economics of the firm, entrepreneurship, and innovation during the nineteenth century (the period of the second industrial revolution). Then addresses these issues from a more recent perspective (the so-called third industrial revolution). Assesses what lessons for the twenty-first century can be learned from an examination of the development of enterprise since the nineteenth century; and analyzes the extent to which today's "New Economy" raises novel questions for economic theory and its applications.

Prerequisites: ECON 1050 or ECON 1101 or Placement in earned ECON 1101 or Placement in ECON 2000 Level.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2020, Spring 2019, Spring 2018.

ECON 2409 (b, MCSR) Economics of Money, Banking, and Finance

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 35.

Introduction to the functions, structure, and operation of modern monetary and financial systems as they relate to the performance of the economic system. Contemporary debates regarding the effectiveness with which financial institutions and markets fulfill the basic functions of finance in a capitalist economy, and the policy choices of the Federal Reserve System and other regulatory agencies will be emphasized. Formerly Economics 2209. Not open to students who have taken Economics 2301, 3301, 3302.

Prerequisites: Two of: either ECON 1050 or ECON 1101 or Placement in earned ECON 1101 or Placement in ECON 2000 Level and ECON 1102 or Placement in earned ECON 1102 or Placement in ECON 2000 Level.

Previous terms offered: Fall 2019.

ECON 2429 (b, MCSR) Financial Crises

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 35.

Presents a historical and theoretical overview of financial crises, from the Dutch Tulipmania of 1636–1637, through the stock market crash of 1929, to the Financial Crisis of 2007–2009. Investigates why financial crises occur, how they spill over onto the broader macroeconomy, and whether policymakers should respond. Covers models of bubbles, banking panics, sovereign debt crises, and currency crises. Closely studies specific historical episodes and considers what lessons can be drawn for contemporary financial regulation and economic policy.

Prerequisites: Two of: either ECON 1050 or ECON 1101 or Placement in earned ECON 1101 or Placement in ECON 2000 Level and ECON 1102 or Placement in earned ECON 1102 or Placement in ECON 2000 Level.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2020.

ECON 2555 (b, MCSR) Microeconomics

Erik Nelson.

Every Semester. Fall 2020. Enrollment limit: 35.

An intermediate-level study of contemporary microeconomic theory. Analysis of the theory of resource allocation and distribution, with major emphasis on systems of markets and prices as a social mechanism for making resource allocation decisions. Topics include the theory of individual choice and demand, the theory of the firm, market equilibrium under competition and monopoly, general equilibrium theory, and welfare economics.

Prerequisites: Three of: ECON 1050 or either ECON 1101 or Placement in earned ECON 1101 or Placement in ECON 2000 Level and ECON 1102 or Placement in earned ECON 1102 or Placement in ECON 2000 Level and MATH 1600 or higher or Placement in MATH 1700 (M) or Placement in MATH 1750 (M) or Placement in MATH 1800 (M) or Placement in 2000, 2020, 2206 (M).

Previous terms offered: Spring 2020, Fall 2019, Spring 2019, Fall 2018, Spring 2018, Fall 2017, Spring 2017, Fall 2016.

ECON 2556 (b, MCSR) Macroeconomics

Gonca Senel; Matthew Botsch.

Every Semester. Fall 2020. Enrollment limit: 35.

An intermediate-level study of contemporary national income, employment, and inflation theory. Consumption, investment, government receipts, government expenditures, money, and interest rates are examined for their determinants, interrelationships, and role in determining the level of aggregate economic activity. Policy implications are drawn from the analysis.

Prerequisites: Three of: either ECON 1050 or ECON 1101 or Placement in earned ECON 1101 or Placement in ECON 2000 Level and ECON 1102 or Placement in earned ECON 1102 or Placement in ECON 2000 Level and MATH 1600 or higher or Placement in MATH 1700 (M) or Placement in MATH 1750 (M) or Placement in MATH 1800 (M) or Placement in 2000, 2020, 2206 (M).

Previous terms offered: Spring 2020, Fall 2019, Spring 2019, Fall 2018, Spring 2018, Fall 2017, Spring 2017, Fall 2016.

ECON 2557 (b, MCSR) Economic Statistics

Deborah DeGraff.

Every Semester. Fall 2020. Enrollment limit: 35.

An introduction to the data and statistical methods used in economics. A review of the systems that generate economic data and the accuracy of such data is followed by an examination of the statistical methods used in testing the hypotheses of economic theory, both micro- and macro-. Probability, random variables and their distributions, methods of estimating parameters, hypothesis testing, regression, and correlation are covered. The application of multiple regression to economic problems is stressed. Students who have taken Mathematics 2606 are encouraged to take Economics 3516 instead of this course.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2020, Fall 2019, Spring 2019, Fall 2018, Spring 2018, Fall 2017, Spring 2017, Fall 2016.

ECON 3305 (b) Game Theory and Strategic Behavior

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 25.

A rigorous introduction to mathematical game theory, the theory of strategic behavior. Topics include dominance, rationalizability, pure and mixed strategy Nash equilibrium, sequential and repeated games, subgame perfect equilibrium, bargaining, and games of incomplete information. Applications to business, politics, and sports discussed.

Previous terms offered: Fall 2019, Fall 2018, Fall 2017.

ECON 3350 (b) Mathematical Economics

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 18.

A survey of some of the mathematical techniques used to conduct economic analyses. Topics include utility maximization under uncertainty; solving constrained optimization problems with mathematical programming; optimal control theory; solving complex equations and systems of equations with numerical methods; dynamic programming; and general equilibrium analysis. Students learn to solve problems with MATLAB and other similar programming and statistical software.

Prerequisites: Two of: ECON 2555 and MATH 1800.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2018.

ECON 3355 (b, MCSR) Behavioral Economic Theory

Every Other Year. Enrollment limit: 25.

Behavioral economics is the study of deviations from the standard microeconomics assumptions of optimization and pure self-interest, and economic implications of such deviations. This course covers benchmark theoretical models of the main topics of behavioral economics: biases in belief formation, decisions under certainty and uncertainty, intertemporal choice, nonstandard preferences and preference formation including social forces, and nonstandard strategic choice. The course emphasizes theory but will also cover related experimental and empirical evidence.

Prerequisites: ECON 2555.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2020.

ECON 3401 (b) Financial Economics

Matthew Botsch.

Non-Standard Rotation. Fall 2020. Enrollment limit: 35.

An introduction to the economics of finance using the tools of intermediate microeconomic theory. Explores the economic role of financial markets in determining the price of risk, allocating capital across space, and moving economic value through time. Particular emphasis on questions of market efficiency and social usefulness. Topics likely to include choice under uncertainty, the time value of money, portfolio optimization, the Capital Asset Pricing Model, the Efficient Market Hypothesis, options and derivatives, and the Modigliani-Miller Theorem. Formerly Economics 3301. Not open to students with credit for Economics 2301 taken in the fall 2014 or fall 2015 semesters.

Prerequisites: ECON 2555.

Previous terms offered: Fall 2019.

ECON 3423 (b, MCSR) Economics of Competitive Advantage

Gregory DeCoster.

Every Year. Fall 2020. Enrollment limit: 30.

Study of the economics underlying successful competitive strategy. Utilizing a small number of fundamental economic concepts and a series of case studies, the course focuses on the strategic imperatives of competitive markets, the sources and dynamics of competitive advantage, and the challenges of skillful management of competitive interactions. In addition, the course examines the historical origins and evolution of the company as an entity, along with governmental efforts to police anticompetitive practices, and develops the corporate finance and accounting concepts required for competitive analysis.

Prerequisites: ECON 2555.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2020.

ECON 3509 (b) International Finance

Gonca Senel.

Non-Standard Rotation. Fall 2020. Enrollment limit: 18.

Seminar. Surveys a number of topics in international finance and international macroeconomics, including balance of payments, exchange rate determination, the Mundell-Fleming model of output and exchange rate, exchange rate regimes, international capital flows, and international financial crises. Involves data analysis to empirically evaluate the theoretical models. Also provides a special focus on Asia and Europe by discussing issues such as Asia's role in the global imbalances and the effect of Euro on the capital markets.

Prerequisites: ECON 2556.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2020, Fall 2018.

ECON 3510 (b, MCSR) Poverty and Economic Development

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 16.

Seminar. Examines the issue of poverty in developing countries and considers policy interventions and their potential consequences. Begins by broadly characterizing poverty in developing countries before examining the intersection of poverty and such topics as education, risk and shocks, health, and the distribution of resources within households. Teaches current techniques for causal identification in applied microeconomics using examples from a variety of contexts, including Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia.

Prerequisites: Two of: ECON 2555 and ECON 2557.

Previous terms offered: Fall 2019.

ECON 3511 (b) Economic Evaluation of Public Programs

John Fitzgerald.

Non-Standard Rotation. Fall 2020. Enrollment limit: 18.

Seminar. How to measure the effectiveness of public policy programs. Covers the basics of cost-benefit analysis and modern empirical methods used to measure and evaluate impacts of public programs. Examines the strengths and limitations of randomized control experiments, natural experiments, and non-experimental observational designs with applications to education, health, public assistance, and labor market policies.

Prerequisites: ECON 2557 or MATH 2606.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2019, Spring 2018, Spring 2017.

ECON 3516 (b) Econometrics

Jessica LaVoice.

Every Fall. Fall 2020. Enrollment limit: 18.

Seminar. A study of the mathematical formulation of economic models and the statistical methods of testing them. A detailed examination of the general linear regression model, its assumptions, and its extensions. Applications to both micro- and macroeconomics are considered. Though most of the course deals with single-equation models, an introduction to the estimation of systems of equations is included. An empirical research paper is required.

Prerequisites: Two of: ECON 2557 or MATH 2606 and MATH 1600 or higher or Placement in MATH 1700 (M) or Placement in MATH 1750 (M) or Placement in MATH 1800 (M) or Placement in 2000, 2020, 2206 (M).

Previous terms offered: Fall 2019, Fall 2018, Fall 2017, Fall 2016.

ECON 3518 (b) Environmental and Natural Resource Economics

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 18.

Seminar. Analysis of externalities and market failure; models of optimum control of pollution and efficient management of renewable and nonrenewable natural resources such as fisheries, forests, and minerals; governmental vs. other forms of control of common-pool resources; and benefit-cost analysis of policies, including market-based and non-market valuation. Permission of instructor required during add/drop for students who have credit for Economics 2218. (Same as: ENVS 3918)

Prerequisites: Two of: ECON 2555 and ECON 2557.

Previous terms offered: Fall 2019, Fall 2017.

ECON 3519 (b) The Economics of Development

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 18.

Seminar. Theoretical and empirical analysis of selected microeconomic issues within the context of developing countries. Has a dual focus on modeling household decisions and on the effects of government policy and intervention on household behavior and well-being. Topics include agricultural production, land use systems, technology and credit markets, household labor allocation and migration, investment in education and health, and income inequality.

Prerequisites: Two of: ECON 2555 and ECON 2557 or MATH 2606.

Previous terms offered: Fall 2018, Spring 2018.

ECON 3521 (b) The Economics of Land Use, Ecosystem Services, and Biodiversity

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 18.

Seminar. Analysis of the economic forces that shape land-use patterns, the relationship between land-use patterns and ecosystem service provision and biodiversity persistence, and the economic value of ecosystem service provision. Investigates methods for increasing ecosystem service values on the landscape and the economic cost of these methods. Analysis of land-use externalities and the failure of land-use patterns to generate maximum societal net benefits; neoclassical economic theory on land-use; methods for estimating market value of land; methods of non-market valuation; efficient land-use patterns from a societal perspective; methods for finding efficient land-use patterns; and governmental and non-governmental organization land conservation programs. Permission of instructor required during add/drop for all students; required at all times for students who have credit for Economics 2218 (same as Environmental Studies 2302) or 2228 (same as Environmental Studies 2228). (Same as: ENVS 3921)

Prerequisites: Three of: either ECON 1050 or ECON 1101 or Placement in earned ECON 1101 or Placement in ECON 2000 Level and ECON 1102 or Placement in earned ECON 1102 or Placement in ECON 2000 Level and MATH 1600 or higher or Placement in MATH 1700 (M) or Placement in MATH 1750 (M) or Placement in MATH 1800 (M) or Placement in 2000, 2020, 2206 (M).

Previous terms offered: Spring 2019, Fall 2016.

ECON 3526 (b) Trade Doctrines and Trade Deals

Stephen Meardon.

Non-Standard Rotation. Fall 2020. Enrollment limit: 18.

Seminar. An inquiry into the consequences of theory meeting practice in international trade negotiations. The historical relationship between economic ideas and the bilateral trade treaties, multilateral trade arrangements, and retaliatory tariff laws of Great Britain and the United States considered. The timeline extends from the eighteenth century to the present, from the Treaty of Methuen (1703) to the World Trade Organization.

Prerequisites: ECON 2555.

ECON 3531 (b) The Economics of the Family

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 18.

Seminar. Microeconomic analysis of the family, gender roles, and related institutions. Topics include marriage, fertility, married women's labor supply, divorce, and the family as an economic organization. (Same as: GSWS 3302)

Prerequisites: Two of: ECON 2555 and ECON 2557.

Previous terms offered: Fall 2019, Spring 2017.

ECON 3532 (b) Business Cycles

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 18.

Seminar. A survey of competing theories of the business cycle, empirical tests of cycle theories, and appropriate macro stabilization policies. Topics include descriptive and historical analysis of cyclical fluctuations in the United States, Keynesian-Kaleckian multiplier-accelerator models, growth cycle models, theories of financial instability, Marxian crisis theory, new classical and new Keynesian theories, and international aspects of business cycles. The current global financial crisis is also analyzed.

Prerequisites: ECON 2556.

Previous terms offered: Fall 2017.

ECON 3533 (b) Behavioral Economics

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 18.

Seminar. Standard economics (i.e., neoclassical economics) assumes that individuals are self-interested, rational actors, who optimize well-defined, stable objective functions. Behavioral economics is the study of systematic departures from these assumptions, and the implications for economic outcomes. Topics include errors in information-processing and belief formation, behavioral choice under uncertainty (loss aversion, reference dependence), time inconsistent behavior (self-control problems), and social preferences (altruism, fairness, and reciprocity).

Prerequisites: Two of: ECON 2555 and ECON 2557 or MATH 2606.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2020, Spring 2019, Spring 2018, Spring 2017.

ECON 3535 (b) Economics of Education

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 18.

Seminar. Examines the theoretical and empirical analysis of education decision-making and the consequences of educational choices using an economic lens. Begins with the basic human capital model and expands on it to consider signaling, the interplay between ability and human capital, modeling expectations, and the many challenges of measuring the rate of return to educational investment. Educational policies from preschool to graduate studies are also considered, including the public funding of education, class size, and outcome testing. Examples are drawn from both developed and developing countries. (Same as: EDUC 3535)

Prerequisites: Two of: ECON 2555 and ECON 2557 or MATH 2606.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2020, Spring 2018.

ECON 3540 (b) Law and Economics

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 18.

Seminar. Law and economics is one of the most rapidly growing areas in the social sciences. The field applies the concepts and empirical methods of economics to further our understanding of the legal system. Explores the economic analysis of law and legal institutions, including the economics of torts, contracts, property, crime, courts, and dispute resolution. Also focuses on topics in law and economics such as antitrust and regulation, corporations, the family, labor markets, product liability, and intellectual property. Students are introduced to online sources of information in law, and are required to apply economic reasoning to analyze landmark lawsuits in each of these areas. Not open to students who have credit for Economics 3541.

Prerequisites: ECON 2555.

Previous terms offered: Fall 2019, Fall 2018, Spring 2017.

ECON 3545 (b) Applied Macroeconomics for Policy and Finance

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 18.

Seminar. When is an economy heading for a crisis? How can we assess its debt dynamics—both government debt and aggregate external debt—and the robustness of its financial institutions? When is an economy set for more rapid growth? Analytic answers to questions like these—which are critical to the work of the IMF, major investors and fund managers, and economic commentators—are the essence of the macroeconomic diagnostics covered.

Prerequisites: Two of: ECON 2555 and ECON 2556.

Previous terms offered: Fall 2018, Fall 2016.

ECON 3547 (b, MCSR) Big Data and Economics

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 16.

A through exploration of the implications that the data revolution, which has been brought about by the Internet and technological advances, has brought to the study of economics. Administrative data, real-time data, and openly available data sets have made it possible to answer questions that were previously problematic, and to offer near real-time analysis of time sensitive questions. Four overarching topics are explored: big data innovations, big data and economic theory, big data for public policy, and the limitations of big data.

Prerequisites: Two of: ECON 2555 and ECON 2557.

Previous terms offered: Spring 2020.

ECON 3558 (b, MCSR) Macroeconomic Risk, Forecasting, and Valuation

Non-Standard Rotation. Enrollment limit: 18.

Frames investment decisions from the perspective of formal macroeconomic theory and data analysis. Investigates trading strategies pertaining to currencies, commodities, interest rates, and equity indices. Elucidates the influence of geopolitical events and functioning of international monetary and fiscal authorities. Considers variation along the business cycle. Develops principles of forecasting and out of sample testing. Discusses the importance of liquidity management and functioning of hedge funds looking to exploit global imbalances. Daily work with current macroeconomic data and formal strategy validation are central components.

Prerequisites: Two of: ECON 2556 and ECON 2557.

Previous terms offered: Fall 2016.