

University of California at Santa Cruz
Econ 197, Economic Rhetoric: Using Economic Theory & Empirical Evidence
in Arguing Policy

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| Term: Summer 2017 | Professor: Aaron G. Meininger |
| Course Dates/Times: TTH,9:00-12:30a.m. | Office Location: Engineering 2, 403E |
| Course Location: Baskin 372 | Phone: |
| Office Hours: Wed. 10:30a.m.-12:30p.m. | Email: ameining@ucsc.edu |
| | Website: |

1 Purpose:

Economics is a social science, it provides a framework in which to organize observed economic phenomena in order to develop an understanding of the world. The economy is a complex relationship of variables and behavior. Because of this inherent complexity, using the correct diction is necessary to the comprehension of economic relationships. The discipline of economics requires clear logic and clear thinking, it also promotes those qualities in those who study the subject.

From the UCSC Course Catalog

“Economics students are expected to learn to effectively communicate economic theory and evidence relating to economic policy to audiences that do not have economics degrees. The skills to be learned are both written and oral communication. Students learn to present convincing policy arguments in position papers, executive summaries, and in oral presentation that may include charts and other means of communication. Students must have satisfied the Entry-Level Writing and Composition requirement, as well as either 100A, 100M, 100B, 100N, or 113, before enrolling.”

Students of economics must satisfy the major’s upper-division Disciplinary Communication (DC) requirement. Economics 197 satisfies this requirement for Economics majors. It is intended “to familiarize you with the demand and rewards of working and writing within the economic academic community.”

After this course, you will:

- Read, think, speak, and write with care and clarity.
- Write a clear, concise, finished piece of work.
- Prepare and deliver oral presentations effectively.
- Support opinions with compelling data and visual aids.

2 Text:

We will be using articles that I will post before class on the class website.

3 Course Policies:

Come to class with a writing implement and a notebook dedicated to the notes you will take and the writing you will do for this class. I love gadgets of all sorts, but I recommend pen/pencil and paper for this. I am certainly not opposed to you doing your work on a computer, tablet, etc., BUT I insist that you STAY ON TASK while we are in class. I like to walk around during class, and I have been working on improving my peripheral vision. If I catch you online (facebook, snapchat, ANY social media), you will lose all participation points for the day.

Online Tools: Course information will be posted on eCommons. You are expected to check this site regularly. Problem sets, solutions, and supplementary materials will be distributed through the course eCommons site.

Final grades: Final grades will be posted using the system that UCSC has in place. W's are given only on the basis of extenuating circumstances and not to avoid a failing or low grade. Please note that THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT OF 1974 specifies under penalty of law that information on grades cannot be given out over the telephone and cannot be given to anyone other than the student.

Expected conduct: Students are expected to be attentive and not to interfere with the learning of others. Side conversations should be kept to the bare minimum, unless we are doing group work. Cell phones and other electronic devices should be on silent mode or turned off.

4 Grading:

Homework, Group Work Policy:

Students are allowed (and encouraged) to work with classmates or to come to my office for help. Homework is assigned as a learning exercise. Even while working with others, you should be sure you understand the concepts independently. Students may be assigned to work with a small group, either in class or out of class. These groups may be asked to present solutions, proofs, etc. to the class

Students are expected to attend and participate in class. By participation, I mean being on time, paying attention, asking relevant questions, working out examples, answering questions, giving suggestions, possibly demonstrating techniques for the class, etc.

Attendance:

Participation (10 points possible/class) In addition to contributions you make to class discussions, the writing/reading you do in class will be considered part of your participation. The quality of what you contribute will determine the strength of your participation grade. (Perhaps it goes without saying, but absence and late arrival will affect your grade negatively.)

Grades will be calculated based on the following weights:

10% Participation (explained above)
5% Self-Responsibility (2 to 4 pages)
5% (Your Major) is ... (2 to 4 pages)
5% Article Review 1 (2 to 4 pages)
5% Article Review 2 (2 to 4 pages)
5% Article Review 3 (2 to 4 pages)
5% Detailed outline (2 to 3 pages)
10% Rough Draft (4 to 6 pages)
20% Presentation (10 to 15 mins.)
5% Appropriate media for presentation
25% Final Paper (8 to 10 pages)

The grading breakdown is as follows:

+100% = A+
100-94% = A
93-90% = A-
89-87% = B+
86-84% = B
83-80% = B-
79-77% = C+
76-74% = C
73-70% = C-
Below 70% COME SEE ME!

Nobody in this class should get below a C-, if you are having troubles and need help, please see me IMMEDIATELY! Do not wait until it is too late in the semester, because it will be harder for me to help you at that point.

5 Important Information

A word about points and grades:

Focusing on points and grades gets in the way of just about everything education ought to be: a spirited, curiosity-driven frolic, where we take risks, and make (and correct) mistakes, so that we can take more risks and make (and correct) more sophisticated mistakes. On the other hand, for some, grades are an effective incentive to frolic. Although this may sound like an ambiguous approach to your assessments, I prefer that you simply recognize the “tension” inherent in school as we know it.

These guidelines are just that, “guidelines.” If we discover other ways for my

assessments to make more sense, I will implement them (never to your detriment). I recognize that I am far from infallible. If you think I've overlooked something when assessing your work, please come speak about it. At the same time, do not expect "something for nothing." Sustained, spirited, high quality work (and rework) will earn stronger grades than lackluster work and "ho hum" effort.

General Paper Formatting and Guidelines:

- Please use 12-point font and one-inch margins. Double spaced, please. And please don't get fancy with your fonts. (Times, New Roman, Garamond, Arial, Avenir... nothing flowery or large.)
- When an assignment asks for a certain number of pages, this does NOT include a reference page or endnote page. (If the assignment calls for them, these are in addition to the page number requested.)
- Your submissions must be on time; they must be submitted by the beginning of class on the assignment due date. Late papers will negatively affect your grade. In the event of illness and/or other family or personal circumstances, please contact me before the due date.

Academic Honesty:

Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated and may lead to course failure and possible dismissal from the University. You are responsible to being attentive to or observant of campus policies about academic honesty as stated in the University's Student Conduct Code. You may work with a friend on homework but write your own answers. Students who turn in written assignments with identical answers will both receive zeros on the assignment.

(from the UCSC Writing Program):

By enrolling in the university, students automatically agree to abide by its policies, including those on academic misconduct. Academic integrity and scholarship are core values that should guide your conduct and decisions as members of the UCSC community. Plagiarism and cheating contradict these values, and are very serious academic offenses. Penalties can include a failing grade in an assignment or in the course, or suspension or expulsion from the university.

You must cite your sources to avoid plagiarism. This requires more than citing direct quotations or paraphrasing. There is absolutely nothing wrong with using ideas that come from others; academic work is an additive process. We all rely on the work of others to advance our collective knowledge. Simply be sure to give credit where it is due. Failure to do so is a serious breach of academic integrity. It may not always be easy to recognize whether you are legitimately citing the work of others or whether you have "crossed the line" into plagiarism. To become acquainted with what plagiarism is and how to avoid it, make an effort to familiarize yourself with and follow citation practices. (see <http://library.ucsc.edu/library-research-resources>)

and the university's Rules of Conduct regarding student conduct and discipline: <http://deanofstudents.ucsc.edu/pdf/student-handbook.pdf> beginning on page 45).

You should know that I take this very seriously. Experience tells me that sometimes things "seem too good to be true." And sometimes when they seem that way, they are. Your readers and I will check papers using a variety of search engines in order to verify authorship. I am more than willing to give strong grades to everyone in class. I will also report academic dishonesty if it appears.

Office hours:

I encourage you to take advantage of office hours to discuss your work or speak about things related to class. If you are unable to meet during regularly scheduled hours, please contact me and we can try to set up an alternative time.

Students with Disabilities:

"UC Santa Cruz is committed to creating an academic environment that supports its diverse student body. If you are a student with a disability who requires accommodations to achieve equal access in this course, please submit your Accommodation Authorization Letter from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me privately during my office hours or by appointment, preferably within the first two weeks of the quarter. At this time, I would also like us to discuss ways we can ensure your full participation in the course. I encourage all students who may benefit from learning more about DRC services to contact DRC by phone at 831-459-2089 or by email at drc@ucsc.edu."