**Economics**

**Fall 2017/Spring 2018 Course Syllabus**

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**A102**

**Office Hours: Access or periods 1 & 4 1st sem, 1 & 5 2nd sem, by appointment**

**Philosophy:**

**I believe that all students are capable of finding success, even in a challenging course like this.  I have high expectations for all my students and I do not lower the “bar” so that it becomes easy.  I set the “bar” at the level where I know students, as individuals, will be able to reach higher achievement.  My classroom is a safe learning environment that is open to new opinions and viewpoints while respecting the opinions and viewpoints of others.  Together we will do our best to find new paths to knowledge.  Finally, because I do have high expectations, I also do not expect you to do anything that I would not be willing to do for you as well.  The key is, be accountable, be open minded, and give full effort and you will set yourself up for success in this course and in the future.**

**About the Course:**

There has never been a better time to learn about economics!  When you look at the world today we are constantly facing economic questions that can and will determine our future.

  Economics is the science of choice. This course will allow you to explore how economics is an all-encompassing entity that deals with every decision we make.  Since this is the case, you will find a number of “choices” to be made throughout the semester.  From choosing your own grade to making important decisions about your future and the world you choose to live in.

  This course is designed to prepare you for the collegiate academic structure of higher education and the realities of the world after high school.  You will participate in exciting activities and make connections between your own life and the world you live in.

This class will prepare you to function successfully as citizens of a national and world community. With increasing frequency, Americans debate and make critical decisions about our complex political/economy.  Major social, political, and economic issues are discussed in homes, schools, and colleges, as well as in Congress, state legislatures, city halls, political campaigns, and the news media.  Nevertheless, the American public, because of its insufficient knowledge of economics, is often confused about the nature and underlying motivation of those issues.  By the time you leave my classroom you will not be one of these individuals.  In fact, you will view the world and the everyday decisions you make as an economist. What a view it is!

GENERAL COURSE OUTLINE

**Semester-at-a-Glance:**

1.      Foundations of Economics- 5-6 weeks

* Students will know that economic choices are made because resources are scarce and that the act of making economic choices imposes opportunity costs.
* Students will understand that economic incentives influence the use of scarce human, capital, and natural resources.
* Students will understand that resources can be used in many ways and understand the costs of alternative uses.

2.      Microeconomics- 5-6 weeks

* Students will understand the fundamental characteristics of the United States economic system.
* Students will understand that government actions and policies, including taxes, spending and regulations influence the operation of economies.
* Students will understand how a country’s monetary system facilitates the exchange of resources.
* Students will understand the tools of economic measurement and the interpretation of economic data.
* Students will use economic data to evaluate and compare economies.

3.      Macroeconomics- 6-7 weeks

* Understand how different economic systems impact decisions about the use of resources and the production and distribution of goods and services.
* Understand that government actions and policies, including taxes, spending and regulations influence the operation of economies.
* Understand that the exchange of goods and services creates economic interdependence and change.
* Understand how a countries monetary system facilitates the exchange of resources.
* Understand the tools of economic measurement and the interpretation of economic data.
* Use economic data to evaluate and compare economies

***Your Grade...***

Due to the fact Economics is the science of choice; you will ultimately be able to choose your own grade in this class.  Your grade will come down to the following grades: Unit Exams, Unit Application Assessments, and the semester Final.  All other assignments are ***optional*** unless the teacher mandates a few supplemental pieces.  Assignments will be based upon student choice according to student’s strengths and weaknesses in various skills (see below).  There will be a strong focus on skills and learning rather than assignment based teaching.

**Gradebook:**

We will be using a ***mixed scale*** grading system in *Infinite Campus*. What this means is that students will be graded upon a 1-5 scale (5=A, 4=B, 3=C, 2=D, 1=F)-*see scale below for additional details*.

**\*Educational research has been found that this type of grading scale allows more transparent grading and scoring, as well as allowing students more room for success.**  Lowest scores on a mixed scale are equivalent to 50%.  Thus, grading is not punitive to students.

***\*However, all unit exams and application assessments must be completed to pass the course.***

***-Mixed Grading Scale-***

The grading scale for this class will be as follows:

90-100%                  A/4.5-5   Advanced

80-89%                     B/3.5-4.4 Proficient

70-79%                     C/2.5-3.4    Partially Proficient

60-69%                     D/1.5-2.4   Unsatisfactory

59%-50%                F/0-1.4    Unsatisfactory

The focus on student choice in assignments, a clearer understanding of the grading scale, and brain based research will lead to more student success.  If you follow the prescription of work to be completed below you will be successful in our course.

**\*When you are looking at your grade in Infinite Campus, you must remember we are on a 5 point scale.  Thus, you have to ignore the % next to your score.  For example, if your grade shows a 4.2%, it is not an F.  A 4.2 is a B on our grading scale.  Also, due to the fact that we are doing optional assignments and grades are based on assessment performance and remediation do not worry about student grades and assignments until after they have had a chance to do corrections and optional assignments are added to assessment scores.  Remember, a T flag in the gradebook stands for “Turned In” and the optional assignment has been mastered and that a blank in the gradebook does not mean a zero it just means the student did not do the optional assignment.**

**Assignments & Tests:**

In terms of assignments, students will be given 4 ***optional*** assignments per unit.  Each of these four ***optional*** assignments are aligned with the skills necessary for a student to be economically literate in our class.  All students should be able to master the following skills in Economics:  Identification, Explanation & Reasoning, Application & Analysis, and Graphing & Calculations.  These skills are mastered through learning and practice both in and out of the classroom.  All students are encouraged to use assignments as practice for specific skills.

As students opt for certain assignments that are based upon these various skills, points will be added to their unit exam.  As a result, students are able to portray mastery of these skills either on assignments and/or on the unit exams.  This keeps assignments from being punitive and creates incentives for students to choose the grades they want.  As an economics team, we highly encourage students to do **ALL** optional assignments as they are excellent practice and can supplement their unit exams.

If a student completes an optional assignment and receives a 5 as a score on this assignment, this will go into the grade book as *T* (Turned In).  This score will be added as points towards the unit exams.  Thus, if a student is not a strong test taker and wants to invest in their test grade, they can choose to do one or all of the optional unit assignments.  If a student turns in an assignment and scores a 3 or 4, students will be given 24 hours to turn the assignment back in with corrections to make it a 5 and thus a *T in* the grade book. Scores of 1-2 will receive no credit.  As a result, there is a great incentive for taking the time and the effort to complete any optional assignment well.

Conversely, if a student has mastered the skills and knowledge of the unit and can show it on a test, they can choose not to do any assignments and showcase their skills on the unit’s content exam.  Students who choose not to complete the optional assignments are still responsible for being able to portray mastery of these skills.  This can only occur now through unit exams and labs/application assessments.

***DO NOT*** panic if you look at the grade book and don’t see any grades except for the Unit Exams and the Application Assessments.  Remember, assignments are optional and we are looking for students to master skills on the exam.  The Unit Exams and the Application Assessments are the true reflections of whether students are learning and mastering the skills needed in Economics.

**Formative Assessments/In Class Assignments**:

**Students will be assessed frequently in class through in class assignments, reflections, and practice to check for learning, understanding, and to provide clarity.  Brain based research has shown that this is more effective for student learning than having numerous assignments.  This allows class time to be more hands on and student focused rather than assignment focused.  This will provide more opportunities for questions to be answered and for more in depth discussion and practice.**

**Extras:**

From time to time there may be changes to assignments, test dates, lab dates, or even extra assignments/optional assignments.  This is up to the discretion of the teacher and it is up to the student to make note of such changes.  The best place to check these items is through the individual teacher’s website and/or with the teacher in class.

As previously mentioned we will be using a categorical grading system emphasizing skills and knowledge.  The following categories in our grade book describe the skills required for a strong demonstration of economic literacy and impact your grade by approximately the given percentages:  These percentages reflect where emphasis of instruction will be given, but do not reflect a weighted grading system.

1. **Identification-10%**
2. **Explanation, Reasoning & Understanding-15%**
3. **Application & Analysis-55%**
4. **Graphing & Calculations-15%**
5. **Effort & Participation-5%**

The following descriptions are the skills we would like students to be able to master along with some specific assignments that you should pay specific attention to.

**Identification: 10%**

Students’ ability to identify correct concept illustrates a very basic understanding of economics. This evaluative category will assess student’s ability to recognize basic economic concepts and definitions.

**Explanation, Reasoning & Understanding: 15%**

Students’ ability to explain economic concepts demonstrates a higher level of understanding. This category will assess how well each student can communicate what they have learned as a measure of comprehension.

*Assignment of Special Note in this Category-*

**\*Naked Economics**

by Charles Wheelan.

***You will be provided a copy of the book.  However, it is highly encouraged you purchase your own copy.***

**How It Works**...Chapters in *Naked Economics* will now be given as supplemental readings that support topics covered in class.  Reading guides for these chapters can be found on our websites.

**Application and Analysis: 55%**

Students’ ability to apply economic concepts to real world situations and scenarios.  Use information in a new but similar situation.  Taking information apart and being able to explore relationships.  Being able to critically examine information and make educated judgements. Using information to create something new.

*Assignments of Special Note in this Category-*

**\*Labs/Application Assessments**

Labs are an essential part of the class.  Labs are considered **Application Assessments** and will make up a major portion of your final grade. These will be activities that require your attendance and participation.  There will be 4 graded labs.  We would strongly recommend you attend all of these labs and complete the assessment of these labs.  To make up a missed lab, you must write a paper pertaining to the concepts covered in the lab.  The rubrics for these papers can also be found our websites.

**Graphing & Calculations: 15%**

Graphs are very important in academic economics as they provide visual representations of very common concepts. Students’ ability to re-create and manipulate fundamental graphs in economics will be assessed. Being able to calculate simple equations regarding taxes, inflation and other items will also be practiced to help demonstrate the application of economic concepts.

**Participation & Effort: 5%**

Occasionally, assignments will be given in class or as homework for the sole purpose of practicing skills discussed in class. If completed and thorough, these assignments will earn the student points towards their total average.  This category also includes class participation and day to day effort.  Students are required to be in class, to participate in discussions, readings, activities, as well as being intellectually “present.”

**Final:**

There will be a cumulative, common assessment given in all Economics classes.  The final will be worth approximately 20-25% of your grade and cover all categories of skills listed above.

*ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:*

**-Written Assignments/Homework-**

A large part of our class will involve reading and writing.  There will be a number of assignments pertaining to various economics concepts/theories.  Identification of vocabulary is of utmost importance in understanding the subject matter; take note of it in any readings. All written work, unless otherwise specified, must comply with the following expectations.

* There will be no late work accepted.
* All written assignments must be typed.
* All written assignments must be 2.0 spaced, within normal margins and a 12 Times New Roman font.
* All written assignments must be a minimum of two pages.
* All written assignments must have proper citation/documentation.
* Use TurnItIn.com when requested to do so.

**-Busy Work-**

        I don’t’ give “busy work”!  All papers, notes and worksheets I give you are to assist you for a future assignment, quiz and/or assessment. The course is designed to prepare you for the collegiate academic structure thus; homework will be a minimal part of your final grade.  There will be handouts that will help reinforce learning but they will be optional.  With that said, you are still responsible for being **able** to comprehend and complete the assignments.  Information on optional handouts is fair game for future assessments.

**-Homework-**

Homework is minimal in my class, but the work you do turn in is expected to be on time and meet all expectations required.  I accept all work up until 3 O’clock of the day it is due.  **SINCE HOMEWORK IS MINIMAL, JUST LIKE IN COLLEGE I EXPECT YOU TO STUDY OR USE THE OPTIONAL ASSIGNMENTS TO PRACTICE SKILLS FOR THE EXAM.**

**-Tests & Quizzes-**

Study sessions will be offered for all unit exams.  If you attend the study sessions for these exams, you will be allowed to come in during Access and/or after school to make test corrections in a testing environment and earn points back on that exam.  There will be no test corrections for the final.

**-Websites & Calendar-**

I have a website that will be helpful in navigating the course.  You can find my website on Chargerpride.com.  You can find it by simply clicking on my name.  You will find a number of materials on the site including links to phenomenal resources, assignments, **Naked Economics** reading guides and notes.  Please use these websites to your advantage and print up any items from them for your benefit.

**-Technology-**

        The Social Studies Department has established that any student in possession of unauthorized technology including cell phones, smart watches, tablets, etc. in an established testing environment will be subject to school policy regarding academic dishonesty.  It is best to keep all technology out of the classroom or in your bags/purses/pockets until otherwise instructed.

**Phone/Device Ettiquette:**

**Acceptable times to use your phone-**

* For an assignment, when needed.
* In an emergency.

**Unacceptable times to use your phone-**

* When I’m speaking.
* During a test or quiz.
* During a lab or involved in group work.

**\*Using your phone during unacceptable times will affect your ability to  participate and may prompt me to take your phone for the period.**

**Extra Credit-**

Extra credit may be earned through team competitions and some optional items from here to there but do not expect it to be a game changer for your grade.

**-Attendance-**

***Absences:***The first three absences of the semester are treated as any other according to school policy.  If there are any absences after the third absence, even if excused, parents must contact Mr. Suwannakorn by phone (303)982-3607 **or** in person.  We have found through evidence and research that attendance or lack thereof has a significant effect on participation, comprehension & assessments.  The **only** types of absences that are automatically excused is if the student is at a school sanctioned function or has arranged a college visit and has checked in with me ahead of time. It is the student’s responsibility to check his/her absence on our online grading program through the parent portal.  Unexcused absences must be made up within **two weeks** of the missed day or will remain unexcused.

**Tardies:**  To remove a tardy from your attendance record 15 minutes of make-up time must be completed with me by appointment only **within three days** of the tardy.  Parents cannot call in tardies.  **Tardies affect your ability to participate.**

**\*Parents and students are responsible for tracking their own grades and attendance regularly**.

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*I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(please print) have fully read and understand the class expectations for Mr. Suwannakorn’s social studies class. I also understand that it is his right to deal with each situation on an individual basis and that he will to his best ability treat each situation in a manner that he deems to be professional, fair, and just.*

***Student****\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* ***Date****\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

***Parent****\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* ***Date****\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

***Period*** *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*I, Mr. Suwannakorn, use remind101.com as a messaging tool to communicate with my students about important due dates or reminders about assignments. Remind101.com is a free website that does* ***not*** *allow me access to my student’s telephone number but does allow me to send text messages about school work. Students cannot message me back, nor do they have access to my information. Safety is first! Personal contact information is not shared between teachers and students, or teachers and parents. Messaging is one-way so I can share the most important class information, reminders and updates, but there is no chance of unfair or inappropriate back-and-forth communication between student and teacher.*

*Students are not required to sign up for remind101.com, but it is highly encouraged. In order for your child to sign up for this free service, please sign the form below and return me to.*

*My child, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (name), has my permission to receive text messages from Mr. Suwannakorn.*