

SENIOR REQUIREMENT PREFERENCES SIGN-UP

Barnard College, Economics Department, 2009-20010

March 26, 2009

Your Name _____ School / Major _____

Month/Year you plan to graduate _____ Email _____

Are you currently taking or have you previously taken a senior seminar (ECON BC3063)? Yes / No

If you have an idea of what your post-graduation plans will be, let us know here _____



There are three ways to satisfy the senior requirement. Please checkmark your preferred route:

(A) _____ Senior Thesis I & II, ECON BC3061-62

(B) _____ Senior Seminar, ECON BC3063 and additional upper level elective

(C) _____ Senior Seminar and Senior Thesis II, ECON 3063 – ECON BC3062



THESIS: If you selected Option A, please tell us your thesis subject preference, even if it's in the most general terms (or write "unknown" if you have no idea what your subject will be). Also rank your section preference (1st, 2nd, 3rd):

Section	Topic
1 _____ Kristin Mammen, T 2:10-4:00	
2 _____ Randall Reback, W 11:00-12:50	
3 _____ Rajiv Sethi, Hours TBA	

When do you want to begin the thesis? fall 2009 / spring 2010

SEMINAR: If you selected Option B or C, please indicate your seminar preference (1st, 2nd, 3rd). Students who elect Option C and intend to graduate in May 2010 should be sure to select a fall seminar as the appropriate lead in to their spring senior thesis.

Fall 2009 Senior Seminars

- (1) _____ ECON BC3063x (01), M 6:10-8:00pm, Perry Mehrling
Topic: Economics of the Global Credit Crisis
- (2) _____ ECON BC3063x (02), W 11:00am-12:50pm, Sonia Pereira
Topic: Social Exclusion

Spring 2010 Senior Seminars

- (3) _____ ECON BC3063y (01), Hours TBA, Lalith Munasinghe
Topic: Human Capital and Human Freedom
- (4) _____ ECON BC3063y (02), Hours TBA, Marcellus Andrews
Topic: Race, Law and Economics
- (5) _____ ECON BC3063y (03), Hours TBA, Alan Dye
Topic: Constitutions, Corporations and Governance

-- Submit this form to the department office 4A Lehman Hall or email roconnor@barnard.edu with your preferences as soon as possible but no later than May 28th..

Fall 2009 Senior Seminars

ECON BC3063x (01) Senior Seminar: “Economics of the Global Credit Crisis”

Instructor: Perry Mehrling M 6:10-8:00pm

Prerequisites: Permission of the Instructor and completion of all courses (except the senior requirement) required for the economics track, political economy track, or economics and mathematics majors. Exceptions to these prerequisites may be granted by the chair of the department only.

Each week of this seminar will examine a different dimension of the multi-faceted crisis that began in August 2007 and by now has swept over the entire world. Readings will be from primary sources including such documents as the UBS Shareholder’s Report (the company’s attempt to explain why it lost so much money), Harry Markopolous’ memo to the SEC about the Madoff Ponzi scheme (which the SEC ignored until too late), and a report by the Bank for International Settlements about the origins of the dollar shortage that has disrupted foreign exchange swap markets. Theoretical frameworks from the history of economics—including Bagehot, Minsky, Kindleberger, Goodhart, and others—will be used to help us put the pieces of the puzzle together. Background in banking, finance, and/or accounting (either classroom or internship) will be useful but is not required; this is a course that involves reading and interpreting challenging texts. Classroom presentations and a final paper are required

1. Bagehot, <u>Lombard Street</u> : Ch. 2-7 Overend and Gurney as banker’s bank Bagehot Principle, Lender of Last Resort External vs. internal reserve drain, speculation Bank of England balance sheet—banking vs. issue	6. Securitization UBS shareholders report Citibank SIVs BIS, Credit Risk Transfer (July 2008)
2. Credit Crisis 2007 Morris, <u>Trillion Dollar Meltdown</u>	7. Dollar IMF <u>Financial Stability Report</u>
3. International Dimension BIS <u>Quarterly Review</u> (Dec 2008)	8. Bernanke and Federal Reserve Balance Sheet Paulson and TARP
4. Financial Crisis perspectives Hyman Minsky, Charlie Kindleberger Cooper, <u>The Origin of Financial Crises</u> Soros, <u>New Paradigm for Financial Markets</u> Mehrling, <u>The Art of the Swap</u> Carmen Reinhart and Kenneth Rogoff article	9. Capital Markets AIG and Lehman Brothers, monolines Washington Post Dec 29, 30, 31, 2008 Credit Default Swaps, Corrigan report on clearinghouse Milne, <u>The Fall of the House of Credit</u>
5. Housing Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, websites Shiller’s <u>Subprime Solution</u> OFHEO, website Zandi, <u>Financial Shock</u> Gary Gorton, BIS, Credit Risk Transfer (July 2008)	10. Hedge funds: Markopolous on Madoff, SEC testimony French on redemptions, Corbin Capital
	11. Global Imbalances, El-Erian, <u>When Markets Collide</u> Martin Wolf, <u>Fixing Global Finance</u>

ECON BC3063x (02) Senior Seminar: “Social Exclusion”

Instructor: Sonia Pereira W 11:00am-12:50pm

Prerequisites: Permission of the Instructor and completion of all courses (except the senior requirement) required for the economics track, political economy track, or economics and mathematics majors. Exceptions to these prerequisites may be granted by the chair of the department only.

This course is centered on the concept of social exclusion. It begins by analyzing the differences between the U.S. and other OECD countries’ in terms of policies that fight social exclusion. It then analyses various dimensions of social exclusion focusing on economic policy tools. The course follows a debate format in which one student (or two students with opposing views) gives a brief presentation of the topic which is then followed by class discussion. Topics include: housing and labor market discrimination and anti-discrimination policies, gender inequality and maternity leave, urban sprawl, the ghetto and housing policy, school reform, immigration, public health insurance, obesity and marriage and fertility. Students are required to write a term paper with a policy focus on a topic of their choice. Students may choose different approaches, such as: hands-on data work, field work, literature review, theoretical discussion and historical perspective. Guidance will be provided for all.

Evaluation: Students are required to read the assigned reading before class and to actively participate in class discussion. Evaluation consists of: participation in class discussion (10%), two 5-10 page policy memoranda (25%), class presentation (15%), term paper assignment (35%), presentation of the term paper (15%)

Readings: Most readings consist of journal articles or book chapters which will be posted on Courseworks.

Spring 2010 Senior Seminars

ECON BC3063y (01) Senior Seminar: “Human Capital and Human Freedom”

Instructor: Lalith Munasinghe, Hours TBA

Prerequisites: Permission of the Instructor and completion of all courses (except the senior requirement) required for the economics track, political economy track, or economics and mathematics majors. Exceptions to these prerequisites may be granted by the chair of the department only.

In this senior seminar we read a collection of essays written by economists and philosophers that relate to three broad topics: Human capital theory (HCT), human freedom, and the role of the worker in the modern workplace.

Human Capital Theory. Our readings will focus on the historical origins of HCT and on the puzzles and facts of labor market phenomena that the theory is designed to explain. We will read some of the pioneering works by two Nobel laureates in economics Schultz and Becker.

Human Freedom. We will read about and discuss various notions of human freedom, starting with a highly romantic and individualistic vision of Marx, and then moving on to more contemporary ideas of negative and positive conceptions of human freedom. Our readings will begin with Marx (selections from the 1844 Manuscripts, Grundrisse and Capital Vol. III), and continue on to some modern essays by Isaiah Berlin, Charles Taylor and Amartya Sen.

Worker and Firm. The final topic focuses on economic theories of the employment relationship between the worker and the firm. The readings will be aimed at providing multiple perspectives on the worker-firm relationship. In particular, we will read about the employment relationship from the radical, neoclassical and the managerial perspectives, with a view to unraveling the philosophical differences in these accounts. Readings will include papers by Marglin, Stiglitz, Bowles, and Lazear, to mention a few.

Here are some broad questions that I hope these readings will prompt us to think about and discuss in class.

1. The first set of questions relates directly to freedom. For example, what constitutes human freedom or what is the locus of human freedom? Is freedom about whether human beings as moral agents live up to some predetermined ideal in the Platonic sense? Or is it more about the nature of human activity as it relates to the creative pursuit of diverse human interests?
2. A second set of questions is to ask whether human freedom might in any way relate to human capital theory. For example, do we have to learn skills or cultivate our tastes, interests and desires to become free agents just like we learn skills to become lawyers and carpenters?
3. A third set of questions relate to whether freedom can be achieved within the context of the modern workplace. For example, is work necessarily alienating? Is it a mere means to other ends? Or is it possible to find freedom and meaning in our working lives?

ECON BC3063y (02) Senior Seminar: “Race, Law and Economics”

Instructor: Marcellus Andrews, Hours TBA

Prerequisites: Permission of the Instructor and completion of all courses (except the senior requirement) required for the economics track, political economy track, or economics and mathematics majors. Exceptions to these prerequisites may be granted by the chair of the department only.

Race, Law and Economics explores the interaction of markets, law and social customs in creating, sustaining and (less reliably) dissolving durable patterns of inequality across “racial” lines – particularly the enduring “color” lines in the United States. This course introduces students to advances in economic theory, economic sociology and legal theory that define an analytical approach to racial inequality in democratic capitalist societies, particularly societies struggling to overcome the legacy of state supported (and in many cases state directed) racial hierarchy like the United States. Topics to be considered include but are not limited to: economic theories of discrimination; the interaction of imperfect information, discrimination and persistent economic disparities across color lines; links between income and wealth distribution on the one hand, the race-based customs of kinship and the intergenerational transmission of economic inequality; introduction to American legal history as well as to law and economics as the subject applies to racial inequality; the economic analysis of crime, punishment and racial disparities in criminal justice systems; the economic analysis of the logic and limits of both the Civil Rights rebellion as well affirmative action; an extended introduction to the economics of immigration, including as assessment of the role of race-based discrimination and competition in the distribution of economic well-being within and among immigrant communities over time; an assessment of the role of race in the extent to which immigrant communities are integrated into host country economies.

Law, sociology and history form the context for the application and interrogation of the economic analysis of racial inequality, with an emphasis on the capacity of analytical economics – including mathematical approaches to economic theory – to enhance, and occasionally cloud – our understanding of persistent, intergenerational disparities in well-being across “color lines”. In addition, we

consider the role of law, politics and markets in the evolution of “color lines”, including the capacity of competitive capitalism to open avenues for sexual and romantic unions across “racial lines.”

ECON BC3063y (03) Senior Seminar: “Constitutions, Corporations and Governance”

Instructor: Alan Dye, Hours TBA

Prerequisites: Permission of the Instructor and completion of all courses (except the senior requirement) required for the economics track, political economy track, or economics and mathematics majors. Exceptions to these prerequisites may be granted by the chair of the department only.

This senior seminar focuses on three types of organizations that present challenging problems of governance with important economic and social consequences – constitutional governments, public corporations, and international organizations of various kinds. The common theme that unites each of these distinctive types of organization is the question of “governance” – that is, the identification of workable arrangements to achieve cooperation for a common good.

What is “governance”? Society is beset with many social dilemmas. One of the most fundamental social dilemmas involves getting self-interested individuals to cooperate. Achieving it can have important social consequences, whether narrow or broad, yet cooperation can be difficult to achieve. Sometimes it can be supported by contracts and legal or third-party enforcement. But in many important situations, third-party enforcement is either not feasible or imperfect. In such cases, institutions intended to support cooperation are sometimes “self-enforcing” – that is, they achieve cooperation through voluntary arrangements. The task of achieving such workable arrangements or relationships is sometimes referred to as “governance.”

In this seminar, we read a selection of essays on the problems of governance in three important social contexts involving collective action – creating stable constitutional governments, establishing effective corporate governance in publicly-traded corporations, and achieving coherent institutions of international cooperation. Although these three contexts are not often discussed in concert, each involves a set of workable institutional arrangements that address classic problems of governance in different ways. Comparison and contrast of each approach to governance may offer some valuable lessons.

The course begins with discussions of economic theories of the state, corporate control, and hegemonic stability. Topics in the section on constitutions include the challenge of the “dilemma of the sovereign,” the economic consequences of limited government, the role of federalism, and problems of political instability or absence of rule of law. Topics in the section on corporations include the market for corporate control, ideas about corporate governance pre and post-Enron, and (excesses in) executive compensation. Topics in the section on international organizations will contrast modern multilateral organizations with institutions of empire and hegemony.

The seminar will be conducted in discussion format. Students will read and discuss the essays in each of the three sections. The written requirement of the seminar will involve a research project and paper on a topic in one of the three broad themes. Together, we will seek to draw connections between these disparate but nonetheless fundamentally related areas of study.