Course Description

This course will be a semester-long referendum on contemporary capitalism in the U.S. Does our economic system meet our needs? What economic challenges do we face, and is capitalism up to the task of confronting these challenges? In other words, is the economic system we have the economic system we want? We will pursue this question with a combination of empirical study and theoretical tools.

The course will be divided into a series of case studies, variations on the large theme of the class:

1. We have known for some time that emitting carbon dioxide into the atmosphere by burning fossil fuels will alter the climate with terrible consequences, consequences we are now starting to feel. But we keep emitting carbon dioxide. Why? What would it take for us to stop?

2. Almost 50 million people in the U.S. live in “food insecure” households, meaning that they sometimes go hungry. Over the last twenty years the economy has grown, but the proportion of the population without adequate nutrition has also grown. Why? What would it take for everyone to be adequately fed?

3. The economy repeatedly goes through periods of recession. In a recession, many people who want paid jobs are unemployed and much of our non-human productive capacity (machines, workspaces, etc.) goes unused. Why? What keeps people who want to work away from the tools available to be worked with? Could we and should we bring them together?

4. At any given time, many millions of people in the U.S. (12 to 15 percent of the U.S. population as a whole and about 20 percent of all children) live in poverty according to official measurements.
   a. Is it because of unemployment? Even when we are not in a recession, some people who want paid jobs are unemployed and during a recession even more are out of work. Why? Could we and should we increase employment opportunities?
   b. Many people who are employed earn wages so low that they work full time and still fall below the poverty line. Why? Should the minimum wage be raised?

5. The most recent recession of the U.S. economy was the deepest since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Although there were many contributing factors, the financial system seemed to be where acute crisis broke out. What caused the banks to go bust? What could make banking safer?

As we pursue each of these questions, we will confront questions of measurement—What do we want to know? How can we assess the variables that interest
us? What measurements are already available? Do they tell us what we want to know? We will confront questions of cause and effect—How do the variables we can (or wish we could) measure relate to one another? How can we explain what we observe? We will also, inevitably, wrestle with ethical questions—Who benefits from and who bears the costs of the way we structure our economy? Whose needs and wants should our policies prioritize?

Economists disagree about how best to describe the economy and about economic policy choices. We will consider competing theories. There are two main reasons for doing this: 1. Considering multiple theories will prepare you to understand more of the arguments made in economic policy debates and prepare you to be an engaged citizen; and 2. Considering multiple theories will push us to engage in critical thinking. By critical thinking, I mean that we will peel back the layers of an argument to uncover the starting assumptions and then question the validity of the assumptions. The more reflective and deliberate we are about our theorizing, the wiser we can be in our choices. I do not expect that we will reach a consensus on the questions we consider. I will be clear about which theories and which arguments I find most persuasive, but you are not required to agree with me. You are also not required to commit yourself to taking a public position on any of the theoretical questions we study. You are required to demonstrate an understanding of each of the theories we study both on its own terms and in comparison to others.

Learning Goals

Course Goals

• Knowledge and understanding – By the end of the semester you will understand the basics of several schools of economic thought, how they differ from one another and how they relate to one another. You will recognize the economy as a realm of human action shaped by the institutional structures through which it operates. You will understand the measurements used to assess the macroeconomic variables of output, unemployment, and inflation. You will understand the basic fiscal and monetary policy instruments used by the government in pursuit of policy goals.

• Skills – Economic theories use both verbal argument and mathematical modeling. You will practice using both sets of skills. You will practice writing logically organized, rigorous verbal arguments and you will practice manipulating and applying mathematical models. (Many of you will find that one is more natural or accessible to you than the other. You will have to engage seriously with both modes of analysis, but I will also present you with enough choices about how you demonstrate what you have learned that you can earn recognition for your strongest work.) You will learn how to access economic data from government databases and practice interpreting the data to tell an economic story.

• Ultimately, learning is a creative act. You will develop the ability to construct your own economic views, views that will be in accordance with your personal values and experience while also rooted in rigorous theory and the careful use of empirical evidence. This is an ongoing project – you need not leave class in May with a well-articulated economic philosophy, but you should leave with the basis to continue thinking seriously about important economic questions.
Learning Goals for Social Sciences Courses

- Students should understand the relationship between the individual and society from multiple perspectives.
- Students should be able to apply scientific methods to the study of human behavior and social structures.
- Students should be able to evaluate evidence pertaining to human behavior and social structures.

Liberal Studies Core Learning Goals

- **Effective Communication**: The ability to read, write, speak, and listen clearly, purposefully, and appropriately in a range of rhetorical situations.
- **Critical Thinking**: The ability to locate, analyze, integrate, synthesize, and evaluate complex information effectively.
- **Reflective Thinking**: The ability to articulate how, why, and to what purpose one has learned; the ability to learn from one’s own experience and to cultivate and direct one’s own intellectual, creative, personal and spiritual growth.
- **Ethical Understanding, Reasoning, and Responsibility**: The ability to make decisions guided by a moral and ethical framework, to understand the societal implications and consequences of those decisions, and to accept responsibility for one’s self and for one’s own actions.
- **Cultural Understanding and Respect for Diversity**: The ability to apply a global perspective to understand, respect, and appreciate the rich diversity of human cultures, experiences and ideas, and the ability to work and communicate effectively in diverse cultures, groups and environments.

Merrimack College Pedagogical Values

This course is offered in support of the academic mission and goals of Merrimack College

- Learning is not just a mental exercise. Learning shapes our lives and actions. *What you learn in this course can inform and empower your participation in addressing the economic challenge of provisioning within the Earth’s environmental limits.*
- Learning is an active dialectic/discussion-based pursuit of understanding, not the passive receipt of knowledge. *You will spend class time framing and asking questions of your classmates and of me and answering difficult questions posed by your classmates and by me.*
- Because we learn in interaction with others, community is a locus of learning. *We meet in the classroom to pursue the shared goal of learning together.*
- Good habits can act as building blocks for learning. *I will set high standards and also provide a structure and support for developing the academic skill set you will need to meet those standards – and many of those skills will also help you in other classes and other settings.*

(adapted from [http://www.merrimack.edu/academics/approach/augustinian-pedagogy.php](http://www.merrimack.edu/academics/approach/augustinian-pedagogy.php))
What you will do in pursuit of these learning goals

Class time and out-of-class time:

Before class: To prepare for each class meeting, do the assigned reading (or listening or viewing). Required texts are available for purchase in the bookstore and will also be on reserve in the library. All readings that are not in the required texts will be available through Blackboard.

Practice the skill of active reading. Use the following questions to guide your reading. Submit your answers (grading pass/fail) on Blackboard and also bring your notes to class:

- What key terms or concepts were introduced in this reading? How are they defined?
- What factual claims (answers to who, what, where, and when questions) did the author make?
- What empirical evidence did the author supply? From what source?
- What causal claims (answers to how and why questions) did the author make?
- Was there anything you did not understand? Write down a clarifying question – a question whose answer you would expect to help you figure out the point you did not understand.

It may take some experimentation to find the note-taking technique that works best for you. (I use sticky notes to mark the passages that seem important as I read. After I finish reading I go back through the marked passages and write down a direct quote or a summary of the passage, including a page number citation. You can try that method, but you might find a different technique that you prefer.)

For each class I will provide a planned class meeting outline on Blackboard beforehand. If you wish, you may print this out and bring it to class so you can spend less class time writing notes, and more time listening, thinking, and speaking – and you can also add your individual notes to the outline.

For this 4-credit course you can expect to devote approximately eight to ten hours of study per week on average over the course of the semester. Two and a half hours are spent in class. Out-of-class work will require a typical student to spend an additional five to eight hours of effort per week on average outside of class.

During class: In one form or another, you should expect to be actively engaged in wrestling with economic issues and analytical techniques during class time. It is in the wrestling that learning occurs. I will do my best to align both the out-of-class work and the use of class time with the current best understanding of how we learn. We vary considerably in our learning styles, so each class meeting will make use of several different modes of instruction. No one will find every use of class time equally well-matched to their individual preference, but no one should find every use of class time equally ill-suited, either.

My goal is to make the classroom environment a safe and encouraging place for you to participate. To succeed, I will also need your commitment to this goal. Your participation makes an important contribution to your classmates' learning as well as to your own and is a course requirement. However, in recognition of the variety of learning styles, I will provide opportunities for many forms of participation.
To develop your reflective thinking, you will keep a class journal. The most successful learning occurs when you are aware of your own learning process and use that awareness to identify your best study strategies. In the last few minutes of each class we will take time to reflect on the day’s topics and your response to those topics. You will write about what theoretical concepts or information you felt you understood most deeply and what you found most perplexing. You will note your mode of engagement with (or distance from) the day’s class. You will also write a short study plan outlining what you will do between this class and the next to reinforce what you understand well and strengthen your understanding of the parts that confused you. I will periodically collect, read, and write responses to your journals, so they will also serve as a private correspondence between us.

Your attendance is important. By enrolling in this course you are not only making a commitment to the course content, to me, and to yourself; you are also making a commitment to your classmates. As a reflection of the value of your presence, your final grade in the course will be lower if you are absent frequently, regardless of your performance in other aspects of the course. The attendance policy is as follows:

· Upon the third absence a student’s professionalism and participation grade is lowered by 5 points out of 100 (e.g. from 85 to 80)
· Upon each additional absence the professionalism and participation grade is lowered by an additional 10 points...
· … until the sixth absence. Upon the sixth absence, the professionalism and participation grade is 0.

Except in very rare circumstances, there are no excused absences.

After class: Follow up on the study plan you write for yourself in your class journal. Be as active as possible in your review. For example, instead of rereading your notes, quiz yourself, test how much you can explain to yourself or to a friend with your book closed. If you study with a partner or group, write questions for each other. After the class I will post a review sheet of key words and concepts you should be able to define or explain, and skills you should be practicing. In addition to working from your own notes, check the review sheet. You may also use the review sheets as a study guide to prepare for tests.

Assessing your learning progress

By keeping a class journal you will be self-assessing your learning progress continuously. I will also provide frequent opportunities for you to get feedback from me on your work in the course using both graded and ungraded assessments and assignments. I will also provide regular opportunities for you to give me anonymous feedback using a format called the critical incident questionnaire (CIQ). The CIQ asks the same six broad questions each time:

• At what moment in class since the last survey did you feel most engaged with what was happening?
• At what moment in class since the last survey were you most distanced from what was happening?
• What action that anyone (teacher or student) took this week did you find most affirming or helpful?
• What action that anyone took this week did you find most puzzling or confusing?
• What about the class this week surprised you the most? (This could be something about the content we learned, something about your reaction, something someone else did in class… anything.)

• What questions do you have for me about our use of course time or my expectations for your work?

I will summarize the results of each CIQ for you and I will use the feedback to inform my preparation for upcoming classes.

Some of the feedback you get from me on your work will enter into the calculation of a final grade and some will not. The tasks on which you will get feedback and the expectations for your work in each category are explained below.

**Professionalism and participation:** No matter the explicit content of your college courses, part of what you will learn is how to successfully participate in a professional setting. The social norms of the classroom may be distinct from the norms you follow in other settings. Professionalism includes preparing for class by completing all of the listed tasks before you arrive, arriving on time, giving your full attention to the class while it is in session, remaining in the room for the whole class period, and remaining on task while participating in class activities. Professionalism requires self-awareness about your actions and your contributions to the class; complementing my feedback on your professionalism and participation, you will also be asked to assess yourself.

Honesty is also an important component of professionalism; please refer to the Merrimack College Academic Integrity Code, which is available on the Provost’s webpage at [http://www.merrimack.edu/about/offices_services/office-of-the-provost/academic-integrity-code.php](http://www.merrimack.edu/about/offices_services/office-of-the-provost/academic-integrity-code.php). Any violation of the academic integrity code will result at a minimum in a requirement that you redo the assignment for at most 70% credit and a ten-point reduction in your professionalism and participation grade. Severe violations may result in a grade of zero for the assignment and/or the professionalism and participation grade, or a failing grade for the course.

Participation takes many forms. You do not have to be a confident, eloquent conversationalist to make a valuable contribution to the class. Below are some of the ways you will be able to participate in class.

**Do the reading and come to class with your reading notes:** Come to class with reading notes every time we meet. Also submit your answers to the active reading questions on Blackboard (graded pass/fail). Be prepared to answer some of the reading response questions. If asked, you may read directly from your notes or paraphrase, whichever feels more comfortable. Sometimes I will ask for volunteers; other times I will ask to hear from you even if you have not volunteered.

**Be attentive:** Demonstrate your attention to your classmates and to me with body language and facial expression. Your cell phone should be switched off and placed out of sight – not only out of my sight, but also out of yours.

**Do the in-class problem sets:** When we study mathematical models, we will spend some time in class working examples. These are an opportunity to practice math skills and get plenty of guidance and feedback before the exams; they will not be graded on the basis of how many questions you answered correctly, but I will take note of how much care you take in your work.
Do the in-class writing exercises: During some of our class meetings, I will ask you to spend some time reflecting on and writing in response to a question related to our reading or discussion. Sometimes I will collect and read each of them individually. Sometimes I will ask you to read from them to a small group or to the whole class.

Contribute to class conversations: We will use a variety of more and less structured conversations to explore the topics we study in this class. I expect you to stay on topic during the time devoted to conversation. In more structured activities, you may have an assigned conversational role. Even when you are not pre-assigned a role, keep in mind a variety of possible conversational moves you may make, including the following:

- Introduce a topic of conversation by posing a problem, question, or theme.
- Summarize the conversation thus far. What are the dominant themes and shared concerns? What themes have we passed over that might be a good focus for the next discussion?
- Keep a record of helpful resources, tips, suggestions that participants contribute during conversation. Share the list out loud and/or in writing at the end.
- Offer an illustrative example from the assigned reading or from your experience. Or, offer a counterexample from the assigned reading or from your experience.
- Ask a previous speaker a clarifying question or ask a previous speaker to offer evidence in support of a claim.
- Synthesize: Identify a connection (or contradiction) between what two previous speakers have said.
- If you notice an emerging consensus, play devil’s advocate and argue an opposing viewpoint (it need not be your own viewpoint).
- Listen for unacknowledged bias emerging in the conversation. Alert us to issues of race, class, gender, culture, and power that are implicit in our discussion but have not yet been voiced directly. (This is critical thinking – uncovering and questioning starting assumptions – with a particular focus on social identity.)
- Post a speed limit when it seems appropriate – ask for a minute of silence to give everyone some time to think.

Complete the CIQs thoughtfully: See “Assessing your learning progress” above. I won’t know which survey form is whose, but thoughtful feedback on the CIQs will make an important contribution to making this a successful class.

Complete your class journal thoughtfully: See “What you will do in pursuit of these learning goals: During class” above.

Communicate with me individually: You can visit my office hours unannounced or make an appointment. You can also communicate with me via e-mail; I check e-mail regularly Monday through Friday.

Act as a panelist in one of the forums on addressing economic challenges: Some of the case studies we do will culminate with a forum on possible solutions. Each forum will take the format of a panel discussion and you will serve as a panelist once during the
semester. You will present one of the possible solutions and then discuss with the other panelists and others in the class how the various proposals compare to one another. See the full project description on Blackboard.

**Exams:** There will be three short and two long in-class closed-book exams during the semester and one cumulative final exam during finals period. Each exam will contain a combination of short answer (e.g. one-sentence answers, fill-in-the-blank, multiple choice) and long answer (e.g. a one- to five-paragraph essay, a multi-step mathematical modeling problem). I will give you detailed guidance beforehand on what to expect on the exams – the purpose of the exams is not to trick or trip you up, but to let you demonstrate what you have learned. You will also have an opportunity to practice the skills tested on the exam beforehand with in-class problem sets and writing assignments (see above) and online practice quizzes (see below). The long in-class exam on which you earn the lower grade will be weighted half as much as the other in your overall average; similarly, the short in-class exam on which you earn the lowest grade will be weighted half as much as the others.

If you have a documented disability that requires special accommodation for you to successfully take these exams, please be in touch with me right away and we will make plans for an alternate test-taking arrangement (refer to [http://www.merrimack.edu/campuslife/disability_services](http://www.merrimack.edu/campuslife/disability_services) for information about the support available to you and your rights to accommodation). If some emergency causes you to miss class the day of the exam, you must be in touch with me as soon as possible to arrange for a make-up. Or, if we determine that scheduling a make-up is not possible, the portion of the final exam that assesses the same topics will be weighted to count as your in-class exam grade.

**Online Quizzes:** The online quizzes will be posted on Blackboard and will be automatically graded. The quizzes will be graded but will not count toward your final grade. Instead, you may use them as you wish to self-assess and to practice for the exams. There is no direct penalty for not doing the quizzes, but doing the quizzes is one way to demonstrate your effort and your commitment to the course. I expect that doing them will be useful to you – if they are not useful to you, please use the CIQ or some other means of communication with me to suggest how they might be more useful.

**Extra Credit Opportunities:** An individual may earn up to a maximum of five points for the semester.

Among the learning goals for this course (see above) is the ability to engage with current economic debates. You can earn extra credit by raising issues that complement the case studies we work on in class. Scan the news media for examples that illustrate (or complicate or call into question) the questions we are considering. Send me a copy of, or a link to, the news story and a 200 - 300 word explanation of how this story relates to the ideas we are developing in class. You can earn up to two points for each article and explanation you submit or, if you work in pairs, up to one-and-a-half points per person for each article and explanation submitted jointly. Please submit these during the time that we are working on the related material during class. For example, are there parallels
or contrasts between the issues of homelessness and hunger? While we are working on question 2, you can submit some related material about homelessness.

The Final Grade will offer a snapshot of the progress you have made toward the course learning goals by the end of the semester. It will be calculated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>graded course task</th>
<th>percentage of final grade (out of 100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>professionalism and participation</td>
<td>15 (your class journal will <em>not</em> be graded for content correctness, but the seriousness of your journal will be reflected here)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>three short in-class exams</td>
<td>25 (10 for each of the two higher grades, 5 for the lowest)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two long in-class exams</td>
<td>24 (16 percent for the higher grade, 8 percent for the lower)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forum panel</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cumulative final exam</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extra credit</td>
<td>up to 5 additional points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Anticipated Course Schedule – Check Blackboard for updates and revisions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics and tasks for the day:</th>
<th>To be done before class:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 21</td>
<td><strong>1. Introduction</strong> Today’s topics and tasks: Introduction, defining capitalism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 1:** We have known for some time that emitting carbon dioxide into the atmosphere by burning fossil fuels will alter the climate and have disastrous consequences, consequences we are now starting to feel. But we keep emitting carbon dioxide. Why? What would it take for us to stop?

<p>| Jan 26 | Posing the problem of climate change&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>In class, in addition to discussion, we will watch:</strong> an excerpt from <em>Cosmos: A Spacetime Odyssey</em> episode on climate change | <strong>Read:</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Syllabus&lt;br&gt;• Boston May Need Canals to Combat Floods: <a href="http://wgbhnews.org/post/boston-may-need-canals-combat-floods">http://wgbhnews.org/post/boston-may-need-canals-combat-floods</a>&lt;br&gt;• Living on Earth episode July 27, 2014, interview with Naomi Oreskes, co-author of novel <em>The Collapse of Western Civilization</em>, <a href="http://www.loe.org/shows/segments.html?programID">http://www.loe.org/shows/segments.html?programID</a> |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Read/Choose forum topic/Submit your class journal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Jan 28 | What is a market? Are markets (at least part of) the problem of climate change? Are they (at least part of) the solution? | **Read:**  
  - Textbook Chapter 1, Principles of economic exchange, pp.10-16  
  - Textbook Chapter 9 “The Economics of Pollution,” “Policies Toward Pollution,” and “Positive Externalities” pp.276-290 |
| Feb 2  | Markets and other means of coordinating human action; Public goods and common resources | **Choose forum topic** – Arrive in class with an ordered list of your preferences for which forum you would like to participate in as a panelist.  
**Read:**  
| Feb 4  | Forum on solutions: First pass at applying economic theory to the question of climate change | See the bibliography for the forum for readings.  
Submit your class journal. |
| Feb 9  | Short exam 1  
Posing the problem of hunger | **Study**  
**Read:**  
  - Gerald Friedman, “Food Insecurity in Affluent America,” *Dollars & Sense* March/April 2015  
| Feb 11 | Describing a market with a mathematical model. Is hunger a supply and demand problem? | **Read:**  
  - Selected passages on the use of mathematical models – see file on Blackboard  
  - Textbook Chapter 2 Appendix if you need a review of math skills  
  - Textbook Chapter 3 “Supply and Demand” |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Read</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb 18</td>
<td>Measuring aggregate income and distribution of income</td>
<td>Textbook Chapter 11 “Measuring the Macroeconomy” and “Real GDP” pp.327-336&lt;br&gt;Read the transcript or watch Bill Moyers’ interview with Robert Reich about his film “Inequality for All” <a href="http://billmoyers.com/episode/full-show-inequality-for-all/">link</a> OR Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, <em>The Spirit Level</em>, Chapter 1 “The End of an Era”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 23</td>
<td>Reflect/review on private markets, the commons, and public goods; supply and demand, aggregate income, and distribution of income</td>
<td>Reread/review reading notes and class notes&lt;br&gt;Take the practice quiz&lt;br&gt;Come with questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 25</td>
<td>Forum on solutions to hunger</td>
<td>See the bibliography for the forum.&lt;br&gt;Submit your class journal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 1</td>
<td><strong>Long Exam 1</strong></td>
<td>Study</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 3:** The economy repeatedly goes through periods of recession. In a recession, many people who want paid jobs are unemployed and much of our non-human productive capacity (machines, workspaces, etc.) go unused. Why? What keeps people who want to work away from the tools available to be worked with? Could we and should we bring them together?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Read</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mar 10</td>
<td>Is GDP measuring what we want to know? Is the business cycle a long-established truth?</td>
<td>Karabell, <em>The Leading Indicators</em>, Chapter 3 “National Income and the Man from Pinsk” and Chapter 4 “The Invention of the Economy”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 15</td>
<td>Short Exam 2</td>
<td>Posing the problem of poverty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Study</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Submit your class journal.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 4a:** Are people poor because of unemployment? Even when we are not in a recession, some people who want paid jobs are unemployed. Why? Could we and should we increase employment opportunities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Read</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mar 29</td>
<td>Measuring and describing unemployment</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Textbook Chapter 12 “The Unemployment Rate” and “The Natural Rate of Unemployment” pp.347-361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Karabell, <em>The Leading Indicators</em>, Chapter 2 “Unemployment”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Dean Baker, “Leisure or Unemployment? It’s a Political Question”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Read</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mar 31</td>
<td>Why are people unemployed?</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Robert Heilbroner, <em>The Making of Economic Society</em>, Chapter 3 “The Emergence of Market Society” sections on “Emergence of the Proletariat,” and “Wage Labor and Capitalism” (optional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Charles Sackrey, Geoffrey Schneider and Janet Knoedler, <em>Introduction to Political Economy</em>, selections from Chapter 3 “Marx”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 4b:** Many people who are employed earn wages so low that they work full time and still fall below the poverty line. Why? Should the minimum wage be raised?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Read</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apr 5</td>
<td>How are wages and working conditions set? What is a good job?</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Submit your class journal**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Read/Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Apr 7  | The minimum wage debate                    | **Read:**  
  - *Economic Report of the President* 2013, Chapter 4 “Jobs, Workers and Skills” Box summarizing the minimum wage evidence |
| Apr 12 | Reflect/review on the business cycle,      | **Reread/review** readings and class notes  
  unemployment, and wages  
  **Take the practice quiz**  
  **Come with questions** |
| Apr 14 | Forum on poverty, employment, and wages    | **See the bibliography for the forum.** |
| Apr 19 | **Long Exam 2**                            | **Study**                                           |

**Question 5:** The most recent recession of the U.S. economy was the deepest since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Although there were many contributing factors, the financial system seemed to be where acute crisis broke out. What caused the banks to go bust? What could make banking safer?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Read/Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Apr 21 | Defining money by its uses; commercial     | **Read:**  
  banking and money creation  
  - Doug Orr, “What is Money?”  
| Apr 26 | Measuring the price level and inflation    | **Read:**  
  - Akerlof and Shiller, *Animal Spirits*, Chapter 4: Money Illusion |
| Apr 28 | Interest rates and monetary policy        | **Read:**  
  - Textbook Chapter 17 “The Demand for Money”, “Money and Interest Rates” and “Monetary Policy and Aggregate Demand” pp.517-532  
  - Arthur MacEwan, “Fiscal and Monetary Policy” |

May 3  | **Short Exam 3**                            | **Study**                                           |
|       | Reflect/review on the course as a whole    |                                                    |

May 5  | Forum on banking                           | **See the bibliography for the forum. Not everyone need do all the readings.** |
| May 9-13 | **Final Exam Period** | Section F (which meets at 12:30) is scheduled to take the final Thursday, May 12, 11:30AM - 2:30PM  
Section G (which meets at 2:00) is scheduled to take the final Tuesday, May 10, 11:30AM - 2:30PM. |

Submit your class journal.