PUP4744-17Summer AW59

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Course Overview:

For Presidents and presidential candidates, the two most important variables with regards to their electoral success are the economy and the issue of war and peace. Except during periods of active warfare, however, the economy becomes the most

important issue because the American people hold government and the president as the symbol of that government accountable for the state of the economy. Whether presidents actually have any real effect upon the economy in the short term remains an open question. But, since all presidents claim success when the economy is good, they get the blame when it declines or stagnates. War and peace are normally more distant concerns especially in the era of the volunteer military although the heavy use of reserves and National Guard units creates some tensions, for example, when the war in Iraq continued with no immediate end in sight and multiple deployments for National Guard and reserve units. But the reality is that the US population is generally not connected to the military in the same way as occurred in early wars with draftee based forces.

The larger argument that runs through American politics and those of other economically advanced states is what type actions the government should take in order to insure economic prosperity. On that question in the United States, there is little agreement beyond a generalized belief in a capitalist-market approach. Within that larger context, some argue for a minimal governmental presence or involvement while others favor a more intrusive situation. As a result in most modern states, the historical pattern has been an incremental one of government action at some level but with subsequent periods of minimal involvement. Despite the federal government's central role in the economy, the United States is a federalist system, which means that economic policies are often localized in their implementation. For example, unemployment insurance is administered through the states, which creates great variability in the benefits paid despite federal guidelines and financing. When the federal government funds the program entirely it has more clout but this is not a military organization with assumed obedience rather the policies are negotiated within Congress and during the implementation process with the relevant actors whether governments or private entities such as corporations or nonprofit organizations..

Ideas have consequences and in economic terms, dead economists still impact our lives today such as Friedrich von Hayek, Adam Smith or John Maynard Keynes. Rarely are their ideas perfectly implemented because in the real world compromises are

usually necessary plus some of their ideas are not as clear upon further thought and reflection. Many assume that government at different levels (federal, state, local) uses business to achieve its goals while at the same time business uses government. Regardless, for the economy, the government remains the wild card - subject to sudden passions or concerns that affect business generally or specific areas of business. Business cannot ignore government as Bill Gates found out earlier to his peril when the government decided to prosecute Microsoft for antitrust violations. That prosecution at one point could have cost Gates his company; the proposed remedy was splitting Microsoft up into several corporations rather than the single entity that exists today.. The point is not that government is opposed to business, quite the contrary; government is usually very supportive of business since that is from whence revenues come from in order to make programs work successfully.

However, government pursues a different agenda than business because its agenda covers more items including ones that business does not normally consider including long term costs to the society, ameliorating human misery, preserving the environment, and maintaining some sense of an open market system. That can lead government to “interfere” with the normal workings of capitalism. The social services that business often attacks as wasteful are essential for providing for those left out of the general prosperity for individual reasons or because of impersonal economic forces. In one sense, government programs mean that many businesses do not have to provide such welfare or support programs to their workers. For example, worker retraining and education programs are important for equipping workers to compete for jobs in a changing economy. Technological change has dramatically impacted various jobs. No young person has ever encountered a key punch operator responsible for generating the physical IBM cards so central to the then new computer age. Data input exists but technology has advanced rapidly forcing continual retraining of workers. Information technology for example allows for jobs to be conducted from anywhere on the globe, meaning competition for certain jobs is now global in nature rather than local or even national.

Regardless, the politics of the United States represents an extended conversation over the question of how much the government should intervene into the normal affairs of businesses operating in a market setting. For example, does government intervene to direct future investment or does it indirectly subsidize those activities seen as most beneficial for the entire society? The answers change over time since circumstances change. Stagnation means loss of economic competitiveness and eventual economic decline – a situation government leaders strive to avoid.

Learner Objectives

- students will become familiar with the development of U.S. economic policy over its existence as an independent state.
- students will be informed regarding trends in American responses to a globalizing world economy
- Students will be able to discuss U.S. tax policy and its implications for social and economic change
- students will be introduced to the major economic players in the U.S. and global economy and their impact on the world economy
- comparisons will be made between U.S. and other economic-political systems

Communicating within the Course

In this class our official mode of communication is through the course email located inside Canvas and through announcements posted by the instructor. All communications between student and instructor and between student and student should be respectful and professional. It is the student's responsibility to check the "course mail" tool or “course announcements” discussion site frequently. You must also create a Knight's Email account at www.knightsemail.ucf.edu for separate official communication from the university. Under university policy, the instructor is prohibited from communicating official information about student performance in the course except through Knight’s email (the email system is free). Students can use Knights email to

contact the instructor outside the course at roger.handberg@ucf.edu. **If you have not received an acknowledgement within 3 days, email again to the address just given but use your knightsmail account and provide your name and which course you are in.**

Course Textbook

Richard Lehne – *Govern and Business: American Political Economy in Comparative Perspective* (3rd Ed).

Additional readings are referenced and attached to modules; students are responsible for accessing those materials when required. Being a web based course, students are presumed to be accessing the web generally for additional information for the three assignments to be completed during the course.

Course Relevant Web Information

The course is outlined in the Syllabus page where you can access through the course website. Reading assignments from the text are identified in the modules you will routinely access as part of the course. . Modules for this course are found on the course website and contain information on the assignments to be completed. Students are responsible for staying current in the course. If you have a fluctuating web connection in your residence, you might consider using UCF labs for completing exams where time is critical.

Assignments:

This is an A Term course so the class will move quickly, do not fall behind since Assignments and exams will come rapidly with little time in between. The assignments referenced to above refer to the three assignments posted on the course website in the Syllabus Page. These assignments involve locating and reading materials and then answering the questions posed in the form of short essays regarding various questions

regarding world government and business or economic policy. Please note the deadlines listed on the schedule and on the Assignment page. Grades for these assignments like all other grades are posted to the course grade book which only students enrolled in the course have access. Assignments are to be completed in Word so that I can access them. **The assignments are a minimum of 750 words with a maximum of 1250 words, excessively long assignments will be reduced in grade (a word count must be provided on the first page). Assignments require five references aside from the text book or modules. Wikipedia is not an acceptable reference; such usage will result in a grade reduction. Late reports are graded down a letter grade a day for being late, after 4 days, the grade reverts to "zero."**

Course grading:

Grades in this course will employ only standard letter grades with no "minuses" or "pluses."

Examinations:

No makeup examinations are given except for the last examination, there are two exams in this course, and the second exam would be for double score if the absence is excused. All students must take the last examination. Examinations may include a combination of short answer and essay. The exact mix will vary from examination to examination. Specific materials to be covered on a specific examination will be announced by the instructor prior to the examination date. Answers to the exam questions are not to be copy and pastes of module or text materials but rather your answer presented in your words. All exams occurred on line and will be timed, 120 minutes at which point the exam closes whether you are finished or not. Do not close the exam prior to submitting your answers, proof read your answers to make sure they make sense with no dropped words.

Participation in Class Discussion Topics:

Several Class Discussion Topics are posted for students to discuss questions related to the course. Constructive participation in such discussions will count as part of the student's participation portion of the course. Such participation is used to determine the difference between which grade the student receives strictly on the points and the final grade assessed. Constructive refers to comments adding the discussion not tirades concerning some issue that the individual is emotional concerning and wishes to vent on others in the class.

Current and Other Sources

There are a number of economics and policy journals that can be consulted for information germane to the course and your assignments. For more current events, one can consult a number of popular sources including the *Wall Street Journal, New York Times, the Economist (London), Financial Times, Washington Post, Business Week* and the various business sections of other newspapers. These are just examples of general coverage. Each major economic sector has more specialized journals and weekly magazines such as for *Aviation Week & Space Technology* for the aerospace industry in its various facets including space activities, airlines and other aeronautical businesses..

Course Grade Structure

Three assignments – 200 points each – total = 600 points. Assignments completed on the web, spread over the entire term.

First exam – 200 points, completed on the web.

Second exam – 200 points, completed on the web.

Total points = 1000

An extra credit assignment, value equal to **50 points** is offered as part of Module 1 in the course modules. No further extra credit will be offered. You complete the extra credit through the Module 0 and the Introductory Assignment.

Academic Purposes and Conduct:

Please consult The Golden Rule online at http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu for guidelines. Students should only present material that they can demonstrate they have studied and learned from course documents and approved activities. Cheating, dishonesty, or plagiarism is grounds for grade reduction or failure in this course.

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's words or work as if they were your own. Do not cut-and-paste others' material into your discussions or essays. All of the writing assignments in this class require you to produce your own informed thinking about the assigned topics. When you integrate your research and secondary literature into your arguments, you must provide sufficient attributions and citations to protect the intellectual property of others. To learn more about plagiarism, see http://www.plagiarism.org. This course requires original work on writing assignments. If you wish to write about a topic that you have previously done in another course, you must contact me before hand to work out an acceptable project.

UCF faculty members have a responsibility for your education and the value of a UCF degree, and so seek to prevent unethical behavior and when necessary respond to infringements of academic integrity. Penalties can include a failing grade in an assignment or in the course, suspension or expulsion from the university, and/or a "Z Designation" on a student's official transcript indicating academic dishonesty. For more information about the Z Designation, see http://z.ucf.edu/.

For more information about UCF's Rules of Conduct, see http://www.osc.sdes.ucf.edu/. Be advised that instructors at UCF are required to report alleged cheating or plagiarism with the Office of Student Conduct.

N.B.

The instructor reserves the right to amend this syllabus and course schedule due to changing circumstances and other problems that arise during the semester. Changes will be posted to the course website. The forums are linked to specific questions identified in the modules. Those announcements can include changes in the course requirements or other items of interest. The Help group is where you post questions regarding the technology and problems of access. See the Course Protocols for its use.