Economics 349 – Economics for Teachers
Fall 2012

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Office Hours: T 1:00-3:00pm
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Course Description and Objectives:
This course is for future teachers of economics and other social sciences. Economics 101 (Principles of Macroeconomics) and 102 (Principles of Microeconomics) are pre-requisites so it is expected that you are familiar with the basic subject knowledge. The objective of the course is to solidify your economic literacy, to help you identify the information that will be most meaningful for you as a teacher of others, and to do so in a way that will help you present that material to others in a way that is effective and engaging. We will also discuss the K-12 public school system in California so you will have a better understanding of the institutional context in which you may be teaching. Specifically, by the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Demonstrate mastery of the California Academic Content Standards in Economics through lesson plans, teaching demonstrations and standard assessments (i.e., exams and homework);
2. Understand and critically evaluate the school finance and accountability systems in California;
3. Develop economics lessons and assignments that incorporate active learning techniques, multiple media, and other alternatives to traditional lecture format;
4. Connect economics to other social science fields as well as relate economics to your own life;
5. Locate additional sources of assistance with teaching and learning economics for continued professional development;
6. Critically evaluate your own performance and make improving revisions.

In addition, you will hopefully gain confidence in your ability to learn, understand and teach economics. Although this course is designed especially for future teachers, it can help all students to master fundamental economic concepts and the economic way of thinking; after all, you cannot teach economics if you do not know economics. Class meetings will include both presentation of economic material and discussions of the methods used to present that material.

Course Materials:
Assigned readings will be available online through the course website on Blackboard. Note that many of the core principles covered by the California Content Standards for 12th grade economics are basically the same as for introductory college-level principles courses; the difference lies largely in the technical level of the analytic tools. Thus, we will be reading some articles on teaching economics that may be intended for college teachers but the methods apply equally to high school teachers. Because 101 and 102 are pre-requisites, our class discussions and readings will assume a familiarity with basic economic concepts. If you feel at all rusty on these (and no longer have your books from 101 and 102), there is a free on-line textbook.
available at: http://students.flatworldknowledge.com/course?cid=1021301&bid=30773 (you can buy auxiliary materials, and a hard copy is also available for purchase online or in the bookstore, but you can read the basic book online for free).

**Course Requirements:**
This will be a highly participatory class; the quality of our class interactions will depend on you and I expect everyone to come to class prepared and ready to participate. Lectures may be used to review content but these will almost always be in combination with approaches that require your active participation. Correspondingly, your grade for this course will depend heavily on your engagement with the class and your classmates, and successful completion of all assignments. The relative weights are:

- Lesson plans 32%
- Group lesson presentation 15%
- Other group assignments 12%
- Peer review assignments 14%
- Other assignments/class contribution 17%
- Final exam 10%

100%

**Junior Achievement service:** All students will work with an elementary or middle school teacher through Junior Achievement. This will involve assisting teachers with five or six economics lessons over the semester (during regular school hours). Failure to complete this assignment will lead to a letter-grade reduction in the final semester grade.

**Assignments:** You will be completing several different types of assignments over the course of the semester. Detailed instructions for each assignment will be distributed later but to give you an idea of what to expect, assignments will include:

- **Lesson plans:** You will complete three lesson plan projects, each with a different pedagogical focus.
- **Lesson Presentation:** In groups, you will ‘teach’ a lesson to the class.
- **Peer reviews:** Each lesson plan will be reviewed by three of your peers (and you will review three of your classmates’ lesson plans each time). The presentations will also be reviewed by all members of the class.
- **Review quizzes:** There will be three individual and group quizzes on basic economic concepts.
- **Lesson assessment:** Write a summative assessment to go with one of your three lesson plans, including an answer key. These will be reviewed by classmates who will complete your assessment and give you feedback.
- **Reading reflections:** After completing the assigned reading, respond to specific writing prompts using the Discussion Board in Blackboard.

**A note about time management:** Because this class only meets once a week, you will need to be vigilent about deadlines and staying on top of assignments. There will be weekly reminders posted on the Blackboard site but please do not wait until Monday night to try to complete a week’s worth of reading.
Academic misconduct: Although I am sure this won’t apply to anyone in this class, I will state for the record that academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: (a) using assignments that you wrote for another class, (b) representing work done by someone else as your own (i.e., plagiarism), and (c) copying someone else’s work on an assignment, basic cheating. Please see me if you have questions.