

## University of Houston-Downtown

**Course Prefix, Number, and Title:** ECO 1305: Contemporary Economic Issues

**Credits/Lecture/Lab Hours:** 3/3/0

**Foundational Component Area:** Social and Behavioral Sciences

**Prerequisites:** None

**Co-requisites:** None

**Course Description:** The course will synthesize qualitative and quantitative methodology to explore important economic and contemporary issues in Health Care, Poverty, Educational Reform, Unemployment, Inflation, Budget Deficits, Social Security, Environmental Protection, Crime and Drugs, and Market Concentration and Power. The course will consist of two phases. The first phase will introduce major fundamental concepts such as scarcity and choice; supply and demand as market forces; consumer choice; unemployment; inflation; and gross domestic product and its related matters. The second phase will concentrate on analyzing selected contemporary economic issues.

**TCCNS Number:** N/A

**Demonstration of Core Objectives within the Course:**

Assigned Core Objective	Learning Outcome Students will be able to:	Instructional strategy or content used to achieve the outcome	Method by which students' mastery of this outcome will be evaluated
Critical Thinking	Evaluate assumptions and develop defensible conclusions based on interpretation and analysis of information relevant to course content.	<p>Through readings, lecture and/or class discussions, students will evaluate their assumptions pertaining to costs, benefits, and financial incidences of contemporary issues in daily livings. For example, the common belief that government can finance all social programs by printing more money and taxes high income group which will not negatively impact the low income segment of the society.</p> <p>In preparing for their presentations and participation in class discussions, students will interpret and analyze course material, data and statistics,</p>	<p>This students' skill set will be assessed by their participating in class discussions/debates regarding the misperceptions about costs, benefits, financial incidences of contemporary issues in daily livings.</p> <p>These skills are evaluated by their discussions/debates in class and by logical conclusions in their individual assignments and group presentations.</p>

		whereby they develop defensible conclusions regarding the topic matters.	
Critical Thinking Communication	Synthesize and deliver organized and well-constructed arguments about course content using multiple modalities (including written, oral, and visual formats) to include the use of technology.	Through readings, reviewing lecture material, researching for data and material to support and to prepare for their presentations, students will have to use charts, power points, orally articulate their positions/conclusions.	Students will demonstrate their ability to synthesize and deliver organized and well-constructed arguments through the following: i. Short answer exam questions. ii. Individual written assignments. iii. Group presentations/debates using power points, charts, tables.
Empirical and Quantitative Reasoning	Analyze or interpret empirically derived information and infer logical conclusions.	Through readings, reviewing lecture material, researching for data and material to support and to prepare for their presentations, students will have to analyze data, interpret and empirically derive information and infer logical conclusions.	Students will demonstrate their ability to analyze or interpret, empirically derived information and infer logical conclusions by debating conclusions from group presentations in class and the conclusions and references that they provide in their own presentations.
Critical Thinking Empirical and Quantitative Reasoning	Apply theory or findings from empirical research to a contemporary social problem.	Through reading and lecture in the first part of the course, and their reading of the class material, students will be introduced to various economic and public finance theories to be used in their research for and preparing their presentations and/or debates.	Students will demonstrate this by locating related empirical papers in their research to prepare their presentations and discuss how the quantitative studies add to the knowledge of the topic matters.
Social Responsibility	Identify the interplay among individuals, groups, institutions, and events within the context of society and culture.	Through reading and lecture in the first part of the course, and their own research, students will identify how components/sectors of the economy, i.e., households, businesses, and government interact and impact each other.	Students will demonstrate this skill through items on exams, completion of their individual assignments and group presentations.

**Additional Course Outcomes:** N/A

**Course Outline:**

- Basic behavioral and technical assumptions in economics
- Consumer behavior
- Demand and supply
- Unemployment, Inflation, and GDP and its related matters
- Instructions and rules for debates and Mid-Term
- Sustained Budget Deficits
- Social Security: Leading Issues and Approaches to Reform
- College Education: Is It Worth the Cost?
- Educational Reforms: The Role of Incentives and Choices
- Poverty: Old and New Approaches to a Persistent problem
- Health Care: How Much? For Whom?
- Crime and Drugs: A modern Dilemma
- Air Pollution: Balancing Benefits and Costs
- Efficiency in Resource Allocation: How Much Do We Have? How Much Do We Want?
- Market Power: Does It Help or Hurt the Economy?

**Grading/Course Content which Demonstrates Student Achievement of Core Objectives:**

<i>Course Grade</i>	<i>A: 90-100</i>	<i>B: 80-89</i>	<i>C: 70-79</i>	<i>D: 60-69</i>	<i>F: 0-59</i>
<b>Summary of Course Exams, Quizzes, Activities, and Final</b>					
Individual Written assignments (due: TBA)					20%
Group Assignments (due: TBA)					40%
Class Participation and attendance					10%
Quizzes, Test, and Final Exam					30%
TOTAL					100%