Course overview

This is a first-year course for Single Honours Economics, Economics Majors students (EC1103) and Joint Maths students (EC1133).

Applied Economics and Policy is a course that introduces students to how economists think about current world problems such as very long run economic growth, inequality, fiscal and monetary policy, Brexit, and even why Starbucks coffee is so expensive. The course also is designed to help students develop data management, essay writing, library, and presentation skills that they will need for the university degree and beyond.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course the students should

- be able to critically discuss issues of current and past economic policy from an economist's point of view
- write a good economic essay
- be able to summarise scientific literature on a certain topic
- be able to collect and present economic data
- be able to design a mechanism for the efficient allocation of a scarce resource
- have developed further their oral presentation skills

Course delivery

The course will be delivered through a two-hour lecture and a one-hour seminar each week, both of which all students must attend. Each student is allocated to a seminar group. Attendance is taken each week in lectures as well as seminars. Failure to attend seminars will result in the formal warnings process being initiated (see the section on Attendance Requirements and the issue of attendance fails in the Student Handbook). The lectures start in the first week of lectures (week 2 of the first term, week
1 of the second term) and seminars begin in the second week of lectures (week 3 of the first term, week 2 of the second term).

Weekly seminars are on the one hand aimed at practicing solving problems and discussing questions related to the topics covered in the lecture. On the other hand, new topics and skills are introduced in the seminars that are not covered in the lectures. Lectures and seminars are complementary ways of achieving the learning outcomes in this course.

The course leader and the seminar tutors are available to students for consultation during advertised office hours or by appointment. The weekly lecture handouts and seminar material will be posted on the course webpage in Moodle.

Reading

The content of the lectures is based on either scientific books or research articles. We selected some articles that you are required to read. They are posted in Moodle. Where students are unclear on any material set out in the lecture, they should consult the lecturer for additional reading material.

As part of the assessments you will be asked to find and read scientific articles. To find relevant articles for a specific topic can sometimes be difficult as google is highlighting news articles rather than scientific articles. In order for you to be able to acquire the skills to identify scientific articles for a specific topic we strongly advise you to attend the session on how to use the library for first year economics students.

Course assessment: Summary

The final mark is composed of

- 10 online discussions (10%)
- Group presentation 18%
- 4 projects 72% (4 x 18%, two per term)

For EC1133 (Joint Maths students) there will be 5 online discussions (5) (10%), a group presentation (30%), and 2 essays (60%)

There won’t be a final exam nor midterm exams. The final mark for this course is based solely on the above assignments.

In the following the different assignments are described in more detail:
Feedback

There are different ways on how you will get feedback. Some feedback you will receive automatically; other feedback you have to actively ask for or engage in the course.

You will receive automatic feedback for your presentation and for the submitted projects. You may also receive feedback from fellow students who reply to your contribution in the online discussions and grader who marks the online discussions.

You can also get feedback if you engage in the lecture and/or the seminar. Furthermore, you are encouraged to attend the office hours of your seminar leader for additional feedback on your presentation and discussion skills.

Importantly, you can get 1:1 feedback on your writing skills from a professional tutor from the Centre for the Development of Academic Skills (CeDAS). This tutor is not affiliated with the Economics Department and thus different from your seminar tutor. More information on how to book a slot can be found on their website: https://intranet.royalholloway.ac.uk/students/study/academic-skills/cedas/centre-for-the-development-of-academic-skills-cedas.aspx

For further information about feedback please see the section on course assessment below.

Course assessment: Details

Online discussions:

We will organise an online forum discussion on Moodle with different topics. In total, there will be 10 topics. You can earn points for each topic if you make a satisfactory contribution. By satisfactory we mean that you make a new economic argument (as opposed to stating an opinion or presenting a few facts). This can be a new argument or a reply to an argument by a fellow student.

You are encouraged to browse the internet and look for economic arguments. It is perfectly fine to summarise an argument found on the internet as long as you reference it properly by providing the link. It is plagiarism if you do not disclose your sources and claim that it is your own argument. What is not allowed is copying and pasting a sentence found somewhere else. You always have to formulate the argument with your own words.

The online discussions collectively count for ten percent of the mark for EC1103 students. Each discussion will be marked out of 10 marks and sum of all earned marks is equal to your grade for this assignment. Each assignment will receive either full credit (10 marks) or no credit (0 marks). If you receive no credit, a brief explanation will be given.
For EC1133 students the online discussions will count for 10 percent of your overall mark for the course. You will need to submit 5 discussions in the first term. These will be marked as either full marks (10) or no marks (0). Your total mark for this component of the course will be marked as a percentage of the 50 possible marks.

**Note that you will only receive credit if your submission is made before the deadline.** Computer failure at home or at the Computer Centre is not an acceptable reason for late submission of an online discussion.

We aim to mark online discussions within 10 days of the submission deadline.

**Group presentation:**

You will be part of a small group of about two to four students. The group will present one of the four projects to fellow students in the seminar. The presentations should last about 25 minutes and cannot exceed 30 minutes. Each member of the group should spend approximately the same amount of time presenting the material. You will be allocated one project for presentation. The project allocated also determines the date of your presentation. Presentations will be held during the last two weeks of the first term (weeks beginning December 2 and December 9) and the last two weeks of the second term (weeks beginning March 16 and March 23).

Early in each term we will allocate individuals to presentation groups, and presentation groups to projects. **The seminar schedule is different for the first and second term, so we will not allocate presentation groups for the second term until January. If you are not part of a presentation group for the first term, you do not need to contact your lecturer if you are enrolled in EC1103. If you are enrolled in EC1133 you should make sure that you have been assigned to a presentation group in the first term.**

You should put your presentation dates in your diary as soon as you receive them. You should meet with the other members of your presentation group at least two weeks before your presentation date. You can find their College e-mail address in the address book on Microsoft Outlook. Students who do not fully participate in the presentation group risk receiving a 0 for the presentation.

Group presentations are marked on the College’s 0, X2, X5, X8, 100 scale. Your seminar leader will assign marks and provide feedback. An anonymised spreadsheet will be distributed within two weeks of the presentation.

If you have a medical reason why you cannot present, you need to tell your lecturer and e-mail the course coordinator in the first two weeks of the first term.
Project:
You will receive detailed information on the topic of each project at the beginning of each half-term.

(a) Format
Each project essay should be between 1,500-2,000 words long (words above 2,000 will not be read). The number of words in the title page and in the bibliography do count towards the word limits.

You must word process your essays. If you cannot word process, please go the Computer Centre and sign up for a course.

The first page must give the project title, your name, your student number, and a word count. The title should be descriptive of your project: “An analysis of economic growth in China” is a good title, “Project 1” is a bad title.

You must reference all sources and you must include a separate bibliography (see section Plagiarism below).

Projects are marked on the College’s 0, X2, X5, X8, 100 scale. It is not possible for the markers to write extensive feedback on every paper. Your feedback will be of the form “ABQ”, and you will receive a key denoting what needs improvement. If you want further feedback, you should speak to the marker. Individuals presenting the specific project will receive their grades at least a week before the presentation. We aim to have a 3-4 week turn-around for individuals not presenting the specific project.

(b) Handing in your project
To submit your project, simply click on “Submit Project 1” in Moodle to submit the first project.

Note that computer failure at home or at the Computer Centre is not an acceptable reason for late submission of a project. Therefore, make backup copies of your project at all stages while you are working on them. It is advisable to save and print out a preliminary version well before the deadline, which you can then hand in (by e-mail to the course coordinator) in an emergency. Start the submission well before the deadline, as submissions after the deadline will be penalised. The only exception when penalties are not applied for late submission on the basis of compelling medical or other written evidence. If you have extenuating circumstances, you need to file for an extension BEFORE the deadline. Extensions should be filed with the undergraduate coordinator, Dr. Hui-Fai Shing. The full College policy with regards to extension is at:
Also, be sure to familiarise yourself with the rules regarding plagiarism, referencing, and originality of your work and check that the project submitted complies with these standards (see section Plagiarism below). Plagiarism will be detected both by the markers and through a scanning software and lead to punishment (see below).

(c) Academic Integrity and Dishonesty:
Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Before writing the essay, students should complete the online tutorial on plagiarism offered as part of EC1101. This information is extremely important: failure to making yourself familiar with plagiarism and how it can be avoided may lead to failure of the course or even loss of the entire degree.

(d) Plagiarism/Originality
Plagiarism is a serious academic offence, which can lead to failure of the course or even the loss of your degree.

Your submitted work must be original in the sense
- that you are the sole author (see also plagiarism below);
- that it was not already submitted as part of the same or another course at Royal Holloway or another institution (e.g. you cannot reuse an essay from your school days);
- that it is substantially different from any other piece of work which has been published or placed in a publicly accessible media for other purposes (e.g. you cannot reuse an essay that you wrote during an internship which is posted on the web page of some institution or printed in one of their publications; also, you cannot submit an essay which is to a significant extent composed of verbatim quotations, even if they are correctly referenced).

Examples of plagiarism are not appropriately referencing sources and failure to appropriately acknowledge the work of others in your essays. To help you familiarize yourself with rules regarding plagiarism, referencing, and originality of your work it is a requirement for submitting the essays to work through the document Guidelines for writing your essays. Also, you should complete the online tutorial on plagiarism which is part of EC1101.

Further information on this is available via a link at the course Moodle page. The Student Handbook provides additional information on plagiarism and lists a number of sources on academic writing. In addition, academic writing courses are available from the Centre for the Development of Academic Skills (CeDAS): (see https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/cedas/academic-writing-communication/academic-writing-communication.aspx) The College rules and processes regarding plagiarism can be found in the College’s regulations on assessment offences, available online at:
Policy with regards to deadlines

There is a strict deadline policy for this course. The deadlines for all assignments are listed on page 9 of the course outline. They also appear on Moodle. That means that **if the stated deadline is 6 July, it is due at 23:59 on that day.** If it is one minute after that time, it is late. In accordance with College rules, the penalty for late submission is 10 marks if it is up to 24 hours late. After that point, the assignment will not be accepted. In the case of on-line discussions, late submissions will receive a mark of zero.

If you have extenuating circumstances, you need to file for an extension **BEFORE** the deadline. Extensions should be filed with the undergraduate coordinator, Dr. Hui-Fai Shing. The full College policy with regards to extension is at [https://intranet.royalholloway.ac.uk/staff/assets/docs/pdf/aqpo/2018/extensions-policy-201819-final.pdf](https://intranet.royalholloway.ac.uk/staff/assets/docs/pdf/aqpo/2018/extensions-policy-201819-final.pdf)

**Computer problems are not normally accepted as extenuating circumstances.** It is strongly advised that you submit your assignments at least half hour before the deadline in order to avoid systems-related problems.

**E-Mail Policy**

In a course with 200 students, it is necessary to have a strict e-mail policy. Your lecturers and seminar leaders do not have the time to answer multiple e-mails asking questions that have already been addressed elsewhere. You should not be regularly e-mailing your lecturers about routine matters.

Before e-mailing your lecturer about an administrative matter, you should check 1) the course outline, 2) the other documents on Moodle, 3) previous e-mails from your lecturer. Chances are that, unless your question pertains to your own specific circumstances, it has already been answered elsewhere. As a general rule, we will be quite slow to answer e-mails when your question has already been answered elsewhere.

You should not expect a lengthy answer to a short e-mail. You may be asked to come to your lecturer’s office hours to discuss substantive questions about the lectures or assignments.

It is important that you check your College e-mail regularly (at least twice weekly and preferably every day). Any announcements about deadlines, etc. will be sent to a group e-mail. Not checking your e-mail is not a valid excuse for not following e-mailed instructions.
E-mail is not the same as a text or Snapchat. You should address your lecturer properly and use proper written English. A good guide is available at https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2015/04/16/advice-students-so-they-dont-sound-silly-emails-essay

Lecture Capture Policy

Individual lecturers set their own lecture capture policy. The policy for the lecturers for this course are:

Jeff Frank: There will be no lecture capture.

Andrew Seltzer: Lecture capture will be on for the first lecture. Thereafter it will remain on provided that there is at least 50% attendance in lectures. Lecture capture will be turned off if attendance falls below 50%.

Petar Stankov: Lecture capture will be on for the first lecture. Thereafter it will remain on provided that there is at least 50% attendance in lectures. Lecture capture will be turned off if attendance falls below 50%.

Note: The lecture capture technology is the responsibility of the Computer Centre. The lecturers for this course can not fix any problems and you need to contact the Computer Centre about any issues with the technology.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecture (Date)</th>
<th>Lecturer</th>
<th>Topic in Lecture</th>
<th>Topic in Seminar</th>
<th>Deadlines for submission of online discussion</th>
<th>Essays/Projects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (04/10)</td>
<td>Jeff Frank</td>
<td>The Generation Game</td>
<td>No seminar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (11/10)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Guest Lecture Library Session</td>
<td>How do we go to all electric cars?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (18/10)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Why is Starbucks Coffee so Expensive?</td>
<td>Do markets work?</td>
<td>Topic 1: 17/10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (25/10)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Why is University so Expensive?</td>
<td>The student loan system</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 (01/11)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Guest lecture (CeDAS) academic writing I</td>
<td>Should dentistry be free on the NHS?</td>
<td>Topic 2: 31/10</td>
<td>Project 1: 30/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Andrew Seltzer</td>
<td>Very-Long Run Economic Growth</td>
<td>Working with data</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (15/11)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Economic Growth &amp; Quality of Life</td>
<td>Data Collection</td>
<td>Topic 3: 14/11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (22/11)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Measuring growth/growth accounting</td>
<td>Data Presentation</td>
<td>Topic 4: 21/11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 (29/11)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Guest lecture (CeDAS) academic writing II</td>
<td>Student presentations of project 1</td>
<td>Topic 5: 28/11</td>
<td>Project 2: 04/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 (06/12)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Technology, human capital, and institutions</td>
<td>Student presentations of project 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 (13/12)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Christmas break</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 (17/01)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Institutions and Growth: Empirical Implications</td>
<td>No seminar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 (24/01)</td>
<td>Petar Stankov</td>
<td>Fiscal Policies in the Post-Crisis World</td>
<td>Essay writing/plagiarism</td>
<td>Topic 6: 30/01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 (31/01)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Monetary Policies After the Crisis</td>
<td>Exercise on presentation skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 (07/02)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jobless Recoveries</td>
<td>Doing peer review</td>
<td>Topic 7: 13/02</td>
<td>Project 3: 05/02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 (14/02)</td>
<td></td>
<td>UK’s Productivity Problem</td>
<td>Turning an Idea into an Essay Project</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Readweek</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 (28/03)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Brexit: Causes and Consequences</td>
<td>Reviewing academic literature</td>
<td>Topic 8: 20/02</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 (06/03)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Populism: The Phenomenon</td>
<td>Building empirical methodologies</td>
<td>Topic 9: 5/03</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 (13/03)</td>
<td>Petar Stankov</td>
<td>Inequality: Trends and Policies</td>
<td>Presenting results and contributions</td>
<td>Topic 10: 12/03</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 (20/03)</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Bitcoin and Other Bubbles</td>
<td>Student presentations of project 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 (27/03)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Economics After the Crisis: A Revision</td>
<td>Student presentations of project 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>