

ECONOMICS 490: WINTER 2009
SENIOR CAPSTONE: The Job Market

INSTRUCTOR:

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TEXTS:

R. Bitner, *Confessions of A Subprime Lender*
T. Hartford, *The Undercover Economist*
W. Easterly, *The Elusive Quest for Growth*

COURSE OVERVIEW AND PROCEDURES:

The course fulfills the University capstone requirement and has six components. The course will be taught as a seminar. All components must be successfully completed. Attendance and participation is mandatory. People with irregular work or attendance habits should find another Capstone. Assignments involve individual work, seminar presentations, class projects and written reports. The basic purpose of the course is to prepare students for further economics study or for employment in positions requiring economics knowledge and skills.

COMPONENTS:

(1) GET READY FOR LIFE AFTER EWU (a) PORTFOLIO PREPARATION: Ongoing.

With the assistance of EWU staff, create a portfolio, utilizing class materials and work from previous courses and devise a job search strategy. Portfolio preparation will be reviewed for both job market and graduate school applications, including preparation of a professional resume, assembly of course papers and projects, interview coaching and preparation of a professional “exit” or “job market” research paper. **(b) ATTEND A JOB FAIR:** Find out about employment prospects; talk to real recruiters; get an interview; verify self worth.

(2) IS ECONOMICS USEFUL? (a) Read and discuss Bitner. How did the Subprime Crisis come about? Does economics provide any insight to the problem? Class discussion and presentations. **(b)** Can happiness be measured? What determines happiness? Using the General Social Survey. Being an economist. Class projects, discussion and presentations.

(3) MAINSTREAM ECONOMICS: Read Hartford. What is mainstream economics? Review current micro and macro topics and applications. Class discussion and presentations.

(4) ECONOMICS APPLIED: Read Easterly. Why are there so many poor people and what have economists done about the situation? How is economics done? What questions can economics answer? Class discussion and presentations

(5) ECONOMICS SKILLS: Develop some economist skills. Face the question: Do I really want to be an economist? Data crunching; power users data guru. Develop some models. Discuss the econometric implications of estimates and forecasts. Prepare charts and a Power Point presentation. Learn about Filters, Subtotals and Pivot Tables. Use Data Analysis.

(6) PROGRAM ASSESSMENT: Exit interviews and questionnaires determine the strengths and weaknesses of the Economics Department, its program and its faculty.