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Syllabus

A 5-Credit Online Course

Economics 200 OAS/C (5255/5256) -- Spring Quarter 2008

[Bellevue Community College](#) -- [Distance Education](#)

Instructor: [Kit Sims Taylor](#)

Getting Started

Only registered students will be able to access the course homepage. Registration information can be found at the [BCC Distance Education](#) site. You will not be able to access this course until sometime on March 31. See "[Online Classroom Access](#)" for instructions on constructing your WebCT ID and initial password. You will also find information there on what browsers can be used to access BCC online courses.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Analyze macroeconomic outcomes, such as inflation, unemployment, economic growth, and trade and payments balances, by identifying and evaluation explanations, interpretations, possible solutions, and reliable sources of analysis and data.
2. Use economic reasoning and principles to compare and evaluate possible causes of and solutions for macroeconomic problems, such as stagnation, budget and trade deficits, or slow productivity growth.
3. Identify the influence and importance of value judgments with regard to macroeconomic issues.
4. Identify and describe the major institutions through which macroeconomic policies are implemented.
5. Identify, compare, and use key macroeconomic statistics; be able to distinguish between data and conclusions based on data; and be able to explain the methods used to gather reported statistics and identify the

Other Links:

[Instructor's Home Page](#)

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(Registration Information)

misuse of economic statistics.

6. Explain the evolution of U.S. capitalism from the Great Depression to the present and identify the major trends in economic policy.
7. Compare and contrast the major traditions of economic thought as they apply to macroeconomic theory and policy.

The Syllabus is a Contract

This syllabus and associated materials are a contract between the student and the instructor. The associated materials include: the [Economics 200 Introductory Page](#); [Course Topics](#); [Papers for Online Economics Courses](#); and [Social Science Division Policies](#).

It is assumed that any student who registers for and remains in this course has read these materials and will comply with them. If you cannot comply with them for whatever reasons -- cannot meet paper deadlines; lack the English ability to write papers; do not have the computer skills to take an online course; etc. -- you should drop the course right away rather than end up with an *F* at the end of the quarter.

Course Materials

Texts

-  David C. Colander, *Macroeconomics, Seventh Edition*, Irwin/McGraw-Hill.

The Colander text is available at the BCC Bookstore.

Wall Street Journal: Students will need to read the *Wall Street Journal* on a daily basis.

You can order a student subscription to the *WSJ* from [the WSJ](#). The first three numbers of the Bellevue Community College zip code are 980.

- Kit Sims Taylor, [Human Society and The Global Economy](#). This is a textbook-in-progress and is available online. Selected chapters will be assigned.

- You will need *Adobe Acrobat Reader 7.0* or higher to access some of the course materials. You can download the version you need for your operating system at <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>

Newspaper and Magazine articles

Throughout the course articles may be assigned from the *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, *Business Week*, *The Economist*, *Wired*, *Atlantic* and other sources. Some of these publications maintain online archives that are available to the public -- and the assignment will include a direct link to the assigned article. Assigned articles not as easily available will be attached to the assignment page as *Adobe Acrobat* (PDF) files.

Features of Online Economics

My Blackboard

Students will enter their online courses via the [My Blackboard](#) page. That page will contain links to the homepages of any other BCC online courses you have registered for that use Blackboard. Always check the *Announcements* on the My Blackboard page for server shut-down times, availability of course evaluation form, etc. Also note that there are links from the My Blackboard page to Vista tutorials and other resources.

Course Homepage

The course homepage will link you to the various course materials and tools.

Calendar

The calendar will indicate start dates for each topic, quiz dates, and due-dates for assigned papers. You can access the calendar from your My WebCT page and/or from the toolbar after you have entered the course.

Course Topics

Course material is organized by weekly topics -- "Topic #1" will be the first week's material, "Topic #2" the second week's material, etc. You can access each topic from the home page. The topic page will include links

to the notes on that topic -- the closest thing to a lecture you will have in this course -- and to the reading assignments and discussion questions for that topic. Each topic page will also include a link to the discussion board and to the quiz on that topic (when the quiz is available).

The *Course Content* logo (at the bottom of the home page) will take you a complete menu of all ten topics. Students who want to read ahead can find what chapters are assigned for subsequent weeks. However, the notes and assignments are subject to change until the start date of each topic. The assigned chapters from Colander will not be changed, but other assignments and the weekly discussion questions may change, and there may be additions and changes to the notes. Any revisions to the notes and assignments will be made prior to the time when that topic is to be covered.

So if you wish to read ahead in Colander, do so. Just note that other reading assignments may change. So don't print out the notes and assignments for each topic until we get to the week for that topic.

Discussion Board

This is where you ask questions and post comments. You should check this daily, as this is also where the instructor will post paper topics, additional reading assignments and other items. There will be a category for each weekly topic. Use the *General Stuff* category for questions or comments that are not related to the weekly topic. You can access the discussion board from the toolbar.

You can also access the appropriate category within the discussion board from the topic pages.

The discussion board is really what makes an online course work. This is where you will have your most direct interaction with the other students and with the instructor. Distance education has now entered its 3rd phase. First we had correspondence courses. Few people took them. Then we had telecourses. They proved a bit more useful than correspondence courses. Now we have online courses and can barely offer new courses and additional sections of existing courses fast enough to meet student demand. BCC offered its first fully online college-credit course in the Winter of 1997 (it was Economics 200). By 2003, BCC offered over 100 online college-credit courses per quarter.

It is the ability to create a virtual classroom through interaction via the discussion board that makes an online course different from the earlier modes of distance education. Without it this would just be a high-tech correspondence course.

So learn how to use the discussion board. Click on everything in it -- note that you can search for messages by particular words (so later, when you

want to find all the messages that discuss *inflation*, you can easily do so).

You are expected to read all questions posted on the discussion board by other students, responses to those questions by other students and/or the instructor, and anything posted by the instructor. Paper topics and some other reading assignments will often be posted on the discussion board. You will also be posting your assigned papers on the discussion board and should read at least two or three papers on each topic by other students.

The discussion questions posted as part of each weekly assignment are to get the weekly discussion started. You do not need to address those particular questions for discussion participation credit if you raise and respond to other questions.

Questions and comments posted on the discussion board may be used in quizzes, even if they are on a point not covered in the assigned reading material. And questions and comments posted on the discussion board may be relevant to the assigned papers and it is expected that students will have read them when writing the papers. If the instructor has explained something on the discussion board and you muck up that point in a paper, it will certainly affect your paper grade.

In a sense the discussion board *is* the classroom for an online course. Not reading everything posted there is the equivalent of skipping class. If you expect to not check the discussion board for a week and somehow catch up later you are not likely to succeed in this class.

Effective Use of the Discussion Board: While you can enter your comments, questions, etc., directly into a discussion board message, you will be preparing longer items -- certainly your papers and probably some other materials -- on a word processor and pasting the material into the discussion board. If you have the software to create PDF files (Adobe Acrobat), you may post items as a PDF attachment. But no other attachment format is permitted in this course.

You will not be able to delete any messages that you post. If you wish to delete a message you have posted, post another message *as a reply to the original message* asking the instructor to delete the message. When you repost your corrected message, do not post it as a reply to the message you want deleted -- when a message is deleted all replies to it must be deleted also.

Your discussion board postings will be easier to read if you keep your paragraphs short. Sometimes the logic of the content requires long paragraphs, but in most cases you can break extremely long paragraphs into two or more shorter ones without damaging the flow of your writing.

Chat Room

Students may want to meet for study groups in the chat room. The best way to do this is usually for a student to announce via the bulletin board that he/she will be in the chat room at a particular day and time and would like to discuss a particular topic.

Private Mail

This is for sending and receiving email. If you want to send a message to the instructor or to another student use the "private mail" facility. This is also where you will receive email from the instructor -- the grade and notes on your papers, for example. When you want to communicate with everyone in the class, use the bulletin board; when you want to communicate with the instructor or another student use the private mail. This is a handy feature -- if you are traveling you just need to get to a computer with an Internet connection. As long as you have the course URL and your password, you can get and send your course-related email.

Note: Use the course email facility for all email communications with the instructor during the quarter. **This will assure that the instructor knows it is from a student in this particular course.** Your instructor gets a lot of junk email via his regular email address and messages sent to him there may get deleted without ever being opened. Only use the instructor's regular email address (*kitaylor@bcc.ctc.edu*) before you get your course password and/or after the course ends -- and when you do, **always** put the course number and the quarter in the subject line (*e. g., Econ 200, Spring 2008*). Email messages sent to the instructor via his *kitaylor@bcc.ctc.edu* address with missing or unclear subject lines will be deleted without being opened.

Quizzes

This is where you will find the weekly quizzes. The quiz each week will normally be available from 5:00 P.M. Monday to 4:00 P.M. Wednesday (that means it must be *completed* and *submitted* by 4:00 P.M. Wednesday). There will be a slightly different schedule for weeks with Monday holidays -- see *Calendar*. Each weekly quiz will primarily cover the previous week's material (*e.g.,* the quiz you take at the start of the 4th week will cover Topic 3), but will also have several questions from previous material.

There is also a *Practice Quiz*. After you read this syllabus and the related materials, you should take the practice quiz. The practice quiz does not count toward your grade and you can take it as many times as you wish. It is in exactly the same format as the regular quizzes, so you can use it to become familiar with the WebCT quiz format before taking the regular quizzes.

You should take the practice quiz using the same computer, Internet service provider, and browser you will be using for the regular quizzes. If you ever need to take a quiz from a different computer, etc., it is a good idea to take the practice quiz first to make sure there are no glitches. For example, some corporate computer-system firewalls block the WebCT quizzes -- and it would be best to know this before you try to take a quiz that counts toward your grade.

[Economics Resources on the Internet](#)

This is an annotated guide to resources that are available online and may be of use to students in 100- and 200-level economics courses.

[Colander Text Website](#)

This is a McGraw-Hill/Irwin site keyed to the Colander textbook. For each chapter of the text there are practice quizzes which you can take and have graded instantly. Many of the questions duplicate those in the study guide. There are also brief tutorials and a chapter glossary.

The Colander site also includes the *Web Notes* (my contribution to David Colander's textbook). These correspond to the little icons in the margin of the text. Each note is numbered and provides some additional information -- perhaps an example or illustration of or a counterpoint to the topic in that segment of the chapter. Some are just a break from the ponderousness of economics.

The Colander Website also reproduces the Web Questions from the back of each chapter -- but you can click on the links rather than type them in.

[Wall Street Journal Resources](#)

Students who are not yet familiar the *WSJ* can download a guide from this site. There is also a [video](#) on how to use the *WSJ*.

How to Succeed in Economics 200 Online

Economics is a difficult subject. There are the theories to learn -- this is where economics is most like a science. But applying the theories to the real world is something of an art. Unfortunately, by the time we get to college most of us have developed either our logical/analytical abilities or our evaluative/artistic skills but few of us develop both. And economics draws on both.

The successful student will:

- 'Attend' class daily by reading the new postings on the discussion board.

Read the assigned reading. There are questions and problems at the back of each chapter of Colander's text. The *text website includes* questions and problems. You should be working through these. Many quiz questions will mostly be modeled after the multiple choice questions on the Colander Website.

- Read the *Wall Street Journal* daily. Look through other media as well. See the 'Periodicals' section of [Economics Resources on the Internet](#) for recommended media.
- Ask lots of questions, make comments, remark on links between the theory you are learning and what you have found in the news media. That is one of the things that the discussion board is for. Twenty percent of your course grade will be based class participation via the discussion board. Each week -- starting with the second week -- you will get either **credit** or **no credit** for your class participation that week. The **quality** of your questions and comments is more important than the quantity.
- Study for and take the quizzes. Each quiz may be a mixture of multiple-choice, fill-in-the blanks, true/false and/or problems. Quizzes are closed book and are timed. Students whose native language is not English may use a translation dictionary.
 - You will normally take the quizzes online and they will be timed. There will be a 47-hour period during which each quiz must be taken. You may start a quiz at any time within the 47-hour period, but once you start it, you must complete it within the time allowed (25 minutes). There will be a practice quiz available before the first quiz so that you can familiarize yourself with the online quiz format.
 - At the instructor's discretion students may be required to take quizzes under proctored conditions.
 - Students who may need extra time or special quiz arrangements due to disability must contact the Office of Disabled Students during the first week of the quarter. [\[Email link to Office of Disabled Students\]](#) See [Social Science Division Policies](#).
- Write the papers. Your course grade will be based on your best of the first two papers plus the final paper. **The body of each paper should be from 1500 to 2000 words in length.** Papers will be graded on a scale of 50 (D) to 100 (A). There is no credit for papers below D. See [Papers for Online Economics Courses](#).
- **A Typical Week:**
 - **Monday** -- The notes, reading assignments, and discussion topics for that topic will be available in the *Course Content* section. When there are Monday holidays the assignments will be available by Tuesday.

- **Monday through Wednesday** -- You will take the quiz on the *previous week's* material between 5:00 PM Monday and 4:00 PM Wednesday.
- **Wednesday** -- I will look over your comments, questions, etc. on the previous week's topic to determine whether you get participation credit for that week or not. **Note:** I will only look in the appropriate forum on the discussion board (e.g., the *Topic 5* forum for your participation on Topic 5 issues). So if you post things in the wrong forum you will not get credit for them.

Grades

Your grade for the course will be based on the weekly participation credits, the quizzes and the papers.

Participation Credit: Weekly participation on topics 2 through 10 will be graded as either **credit** or **no credit**. Each weekly credit will make up 2.5% of the course grade -- for up to 8 weeks, or 20% of the course grade in all -- so you can miss one week of class participation. Participation for Topic 1 will not be graded.

Quizzes: There will be nine quizzes. Your final course grade will include the grades on your best 5 of the first 8 quizzes plus your grade on the final quiz. Each quiz will count for 5% of the course grade -- so 30% of the course grade is based on the quizzes. The first quiz will cover Topic 1 and Topic 2. **There are no make-ups on quizzes for any reason whatsoever.** Computers crash, power lines blow down, computers (and students) are sometimes flattened by viruses, etc. It is for those reasons that 3 of the weekly quizzes will be dropped from your final grade.

Papers: Half of the course grade will be based on your papers. The first or second paper (or the best grade of the two if you write both) will make up 20% of the course grade. The final paper will count for 30% of the course grade.

The grading scale for this course is strictly as follows:

A	95-100%	B-	75-79%	D+	55-59%
A-	90-94%	C+	70-74%	D	50-55%
B+	85-89%	C	65-69%	F	0-49%
B	80-85%	C-	60-64%		

Students who fail to complete the course but do not withdraw by the deadline (May 16) will receive an F for the course. **Note that BCC no longer has the Z**

grade.

Students caught cheating on any item will receive an F for the entire course: See [BCC Social Science Division Policies](#). The Dean of Students will be informed of any instances of cheating and BCC may choose to take further action, such as expulsion.

Plagiarism will be dealt with very seriously in this course. If you don't think you know the difference between plagiarism and the acceptable use of sources, check the University of Indiana site [Plagiarism: What It is and How to Recognize and Avoid It](#). Plagiarism will result in an F for this course. A copy of the paper containing plagiarism will be sent to the Dean of Students along with a notice of the action that was taken. The Dean of Students may take further action, which can include expulsion. I may also identify the plagiarized paper as such to the other students in the class. And I may also notify the author or copyright holder of the material that was plagiarized from of this act of plagiarism. Plagiarism is not only a severe violation of academic standards, it is theft of intellectual property and a violation of copyright laws.

Deadlines & Due-Dates

Meeting deadlines and due-dates is critical to your success as a student in this online course. Other students cannot read your paper if you haven't posted it on time and you can't post it if you haven't kept up with the reading. The same applies to the weekly class participation. If work or family commitments are going to prevent you from complying with the deadlines and due-dates it would be best to drop the course and take it in some future quarter when you can stick to the due-dates.

Note: All deadlines are on Seattle time -- Pacific Daylight Time.

With some foresight, most potential deadline problems can be avoided:

- **Back Up All Your Work:** *Blessed are the pessimists for they hath made back-ups.* Veteran computer-users do this as a matter of course. Keep a backup of all your work somewhere other than in your computer's hard drive.
- **Have a 'Crash' Plan:** Find another computer -- with an internet connection -- that you can use temporarily if something happens to your regular computer.
- **Do Everything Early:** Deadlines are the latest that you can turn something in and get credit for it. There is nothing to prevent you from posting your assignments early. Everything in this course is structured to allow a *minimum* of 47 hours for posting an assignment or taking a quiz.

- **Excuses, Excuses:** Remember, I've heard them all, so don't give me any excuse that you wouldn't give your employer or the IRS. If you do not meet the class participation deadlines for one week, that will be the week that is left out of your final grade. If you miss the deadline for one of the first two papers, that will be the one that is left out of your final grade.

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