

## General Education Course Proposal

Proposed Course: ECON 176 ECONOMICS THEMES IN FILM Units 3  
Prefix No. Title

Department: ECONOMICS School: SOCIAL SCIENCES

### GE Category (Indicate one category only):

Foundation: A1\_\_\_; A2\_\_\_; A3\_\_\_; B4\_\_\_  
Breadth: B1\_\_\_; B2\_\_\_; C1\_\_\_; C2\_\_\_; D\_\_\_; E\_\_\_  
Integration: B\_\_\_; C\_\_\_; D X; International/Multicultural\_\_\_

Existing Course\_\_\_; Revised Course X; New Course\_\_\_

Course Included in Current GE Program NO

New courses require the Undergraduate Course Proposal form in addition to this form.

Revised courses require the Undergraduate Course Change Request in addition to this form.

**Proposed catalog description:** Limit course description to 40 words using succinct phrases. Include prerequisites, limitations, lecture/lab hours. Indicate former course number, e.g., (Former Biol 105)

EMPHASIZES ECONOMIC CONCEPTS, ISSUES, AND INSTITUTIONS THROUGH AN INTEGRATED SERIES OF CLASSIC FILMS, LECTURES, AND DISCUSSIONS. STUDENTS WILL APPLY THE ECONOMIC WAY OF THINKING TO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS THAT INCULDE SUCH TOPICS AS ECONOMIC GROWTH, UNEMPLOYMENT, INCOME DISTRIBUTION, DISCRIMINATION, AND THE GLOBAL ECONOMY.

Enrollment limit per section: 35

Expected number of sections per semester – Year 1 1; Year 3 2 - 3

### Attachments:

1. A statement presenting the ways in which this course meets the Specifications provided in the appropriate section of the General Education Policy as well as in the Policies for Inclusion and Evaluation of General Education Courses.
2. A statement of elements common to all sections of this course, identifying content, objectives, required student activities, grading policy, representative texts, and an approximate schedule for the course. Required student activities include such things as papers, research projects, homework, laboratory and/or studio performance, recitations, participation, attendance, and exams.
3. A typical syllabus for a particular offering of the course.
4. Any special cost factors associated with this course.

### Approval for Inclusion in General Education

Department Chair

9/21/98  
Date

School Curriculum Committee

Date

School Dean

Date

General Education Subcommittee

Date

Associate Provost

Date

1/14/98

**ATTACHMENT 2**  
General Course Syllabus

**ECONOMICS 176: ECONOMIC THEMES IN FILM**  
Department of Economics, California State University, Fresno

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**CATALOG DESCRIPTION**

Economics 176. Economics Through Films (3). Emphasizes economic concepts, issues, and institutions through an integrated series of classic films, lectures, and discussions. Students will apply economic theory to contemporary problems.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Economics 176 is designed for upper division students who have already completed their lower division general education requirements in the social sciences. This course provides an introduction to the breadth and depth of human experience as seen through the lens of classic twentieth century films. The course combines the use classic films and documentaries about contemporary social issues with modern economic perspectives from theoretical as well as institutional views. This multi-disciplinary experience enhances students' ability to frame problems using an eclectic array of economic perspectives. Through classroom discussion and written papers students will demonstrate their ability to both describe and critique a variety of potential solutions to modern economic and social problems.

**COMMON COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. Students will master a set of economic concepts and analytical tools that can be applied to any modern society.
2. Students will examine a set of economic and social problems and analyze them with different economic paradigms.
3. Students will demonstrate their ability to apply economic principles to issues confronting individuals as well as to society as a whole.
4. Students will be able to identify and critique films from a social science perspective.

**PREREQUISITES**

Upper-division standing.

**GRADING POLICY**

The instructor will determine the relative weights of the assignments and tests, as well as the weights assigned for matters of attendance and class participation. Specific course syllabi will state these weights clearly.

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All instructors will keep accurate and timely records of grades received. Grades will be based on an A-F scale, with the instructor to determine whether a curve will establish the grades, or preset points, or some other basis. The syllabi will reflect clearly the method by which semester grades will be determined. CR/NC grades may be administered when such a grading method has been authorized through University procedures.

## ATTENDANCE

Attendance policy is to be determined by the instructor, but since this is a media based class, significant penalties must be attached to class absence. Attendance policy and all penalties relating to missed classes will be clearly stated on specific course syllabi.

## TEXTS AND READINGS

Specific texts will be determined by the course instructor. Such determination may include consultation with the Departmental Chair and/or the appropriate Departmental Committee.

Readings and assignments will be designed to commit students to an average of two hours of independent preparation for each hour of lecture.

## REQUIRED BOOKS AND SUPPLEMENTAL READING

Books that may be used in the course include, but are not limited to:

Robert L. Heilbroner, *The Making of Economic Society*. 10<sup>th</sup> Edition, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.:Prentice Hall, 1996.

Milton and Rose Friedman, *Free to Choose*, Harvest Edition, New York: Harcourt Brace & Co. 1990

Alan S. Blinder, *Hard Heads, Soft Hearts: Tough Minded Economics for a Just Society*. Addison-Wesley, 1987.

Douglas Dowd. *Against the Conventional Wisdom: A Primer for Current Economic Controversies*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1997.

Paul Krugman. *Peddling Prosperity: Economic Sense and Nonsense in the Age of Diminished Expectations*, New York: Norton, 1994.

Lester Thurow, *The Future of Capitalism: How Today's Economic Forces Shape Tomorrow's World*, New York: W. Morrow, 1996.

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## COMMON COURSE OUTLINE:

The course may follow a schematic outline as summarized below:

1. The basic economic problem of all societies ---scarcity
2. The process of economic development and change
2. The emergence of market societies
3. The historical roots of modern industrial society
4. Market structure and power versus the consumer
5. Macroeconomic problems of unemployment and inflation
6. Money and banking in the modern economy
7. Government intervention in the economy
8. Labor markets, labor unions, and worker welfare
9. Income distribution, poverty and discrimination
10. Public choice models of government behavior in regulating the economy
11. Areas of market failure such as ecology and the environment
12. Multi-national business and the emergence of a global market

## ALLOCATION OF COURSE TIME

Approximately one week of course time should be devoted to each topic on the outline. This allows instructors some latitude to spend somewhat more time on those topics of greater interest. For example, the international section of the outline could be enhanced by adding topics about economics in the Third World, or by focusing on the new transitional economies of the former Soviet Union. In determination of the allocation of time devoted to topics, reasonable latitude, based upon professional interest, inclination, specialization and theoretical orientation, will be allowed. Nevertheless, the common theme of using films and lectures to enhance each student's ability to engage in the economic way of thinking must be applied throughout.

## COURSE CALENDAR: EXAMS, ASSIGNMENTS, AND WRITING REQUIREMENT

The instructor will determine the frequency and nature of exams, as well as all other assignments. The course outline will clearly reflect the relative weights of each assignment, the grading criteria, and grading scale.

### Frequency of exams and assignments:

There will be a minimum of two in-class exams, including the final exam. The final exam will be administered according to the Final Exam Schedule. In addition, students will be required to produce a student journal as well as a term paper. See below.

### **Writing:**

This course will require students to write significantly more than the General Education minimum of 4,000 words by engaging them in a variety of assignments.

#### **Student Journal**

All students will be expected to produce a weekly journal that contains their reactions to the films and is indicative of their appreciation of the economic approach to the particular problems being highlighted during that week. Each entry in the journal will be approximately one typewritten page and will be turned into the instructor during the week following the lecture/film presentation. A minimum of 12 journal assignments will be collected and graded by the instructor.

#### **Term Paper**

All students will be required to write a term paper that demonstrates their ability to apply economic principles to important social and economic issues as seen in major motion pictures. Students will choose a film that is not in the course, and indicate the set of economics principles or concepts illustrated in their selection. Students must validate their assertion with specific examples from the film itself. Students must also provide appropriate bibliographic data about the film and the print sources they used in writing their term paper.

#### **Examinations**

Exams will include in-class writing of either essay questions or short-answer questions. Such writing will constitute a significant portion of all in-class exams.

#### **Quizzes, homework, etc.:**

Additional exams, quizzes, graded out-of-class assignments, homework, etc. may be assigned by the instructor.

#### **Exam dates:**

Approximate dates for all exams and assignments will be included on the specific syllabus.

#### **Writing assignments**

A brief description of any writing assignment, paper or other such assignment will be included in the specific course syllabus.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

The specific outline will clearly state policies regarding attendance, make-up exams, late papers, missed assignments.

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## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

All students with disabilities will receive every reasonable accommodation to facilitate their learning and testing evaluation. They will be instructed to discuss their needs with the instructor during the first week of class.

## PLAGIARISM, CHEATING, CLASS CONDUCT

All instructors will either directly refer students to University policy in the *Catalog* and *Schedule of Courses* or state University policy regarding such matters in their course syllabi.

## FEES

Normally, there will be no student fees for this course.

**ATTACHMENT 3**

Typical Course Syllabus

**ECONOMICS 176: ECONOMIC THEMES IN FILM**  
Department of Economics, California State University, Fresno

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**ECONOMICS 176**

Economics Through Films  
FALL 1998

**INSTRUCTOR:** DR. DON R. LEET  
**OFFICE:** Peters Building 340  
**PHONE:** 278-4045 (Direct) or 278-3916 (Department Secretary)  
**EMAIL:** don\_leet@csufresno.edu  
**OFFICE HOURS:** Monday 1400-1500; Tuesday & Thursday 1530-1700 (or by appointment)

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

1. Robert L. Heilbroner, *The Making of Economic Society*, Tenth Edition. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.:Prentice Hall, 1996. Identified as (H) in reading list.
2. Milton and Rose Friedman, *Free to Choose*, Harvest Edition. New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1990. Identified as (MRF) in reading list.

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

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### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. Students will master a set of economic concepts and analytical tools that can be applied to any modern society.
2. Students will examine a set of economic and social problems and analyze them with different economic paradigms.
3. Students will demonstrate their ability to apply economic principles to issues confronting individuals as well as to society as a whole.
4. Students will be able to identify and critique films from a social science perspective.

### **PLAGIARISM**

Students should read the relevant sections of the University Catalog regarding plagiarism. This is especially important with regard to your term paper.

### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students with disabilities should identify themselves to the instructor to ensure accommodation. To initiate services and to establish verification of disability contact the Services for Students with Disabilities at 278-2811 for an appointment.

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Attendance is mandatory. Two or more unexcused absences will result in a reduction in your grade. See grading policies below.

### **CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM**

The university has a written policy on cheating and plagiarism. Refer to the catalog or the schedule of courses for details.

### **CLASSROOM CONDUCT**

Please refer to the Catalog or the Schedule of Courses for the specific policy on classroom conduct. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.



ATTACHMENT 3  
ECONOMICS 176: Economic Themes in Film

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DATES	TOPIC	READING ASSIGNMENT	AV MATERIAL
Aug 27	Course Overview	Chapter 1 (H)	The Kingdom of Mocha Nanook of the North
Sept 3	The Basic Economic Problem: Confronting Scarcity	Chapter 2 (H)	Land Without Bread Man of Aran
Sept 10	The Emergence of A Market Society	Chapter 3 (H) Chapter 1 (MRF)	Power of the Market Wall Street
Sept 17	The Early Industrial Revolution	Chapter 4 (H)	Glass Germinal
Sep. 24	The Impact of Industrial Technology	Chapter 5 (H)	Modern Times Loose Bolts
Oct. 1	Market Structure and Market Power	Chapter 6 (H) Chapter 7 (MRF)	Man in the White Suit Who Protects the Consumer?
Oct 8	<b>***** MIDTERM EXAMINATION **** October 8 *****</b>		
Oct 15	Macroeconomic Disaster: The Great Depression	Chapter 7 (H) Chapter 3 (MRF)	The Grapes of Wrath Anatomy of a Disaster
Oct 22	The Evolution of Guided Capitalism: Savior or Scapegoat	Chapter 8 (H) Chapter 4 (MRF)	It's A Wonderful Life The Incredible Bread Machine
Oct 29	Labor Markets and Labor Unions	Chapter 8 (MRF)	Who Protects the Worker? Salt of the Earth
Nov 5	Income Distribution and the Roots of Discrimination	Chapter 5 (MRF)	Hunger in America A Raisin in the Sun
Nov 12	Public Choice Economics: Understanding Government Decisions	Chapter 9 (H) Chapter 10 (MRF)	Born Yesterday The Further Adventures of Uncle Sam

ATTACHMENT 3  
ECONOMICS 176: Economic Themes in Film

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DATES	TOPIC	READING ASSIGNMENT	AV MATERIAL
Nov 19	Market Failure: Externalities, Ecology, And Economic Growth	Chapter 7 (MRF)	Who Protects the Consumer ? The China Syndrome
Dec 3	The Multi-National Corporation In An International Economy: Triumph Or Tragedy ?	Chapter 10 (H) Chapter 2 (MRF)	Roger and Me The Big One

\*\*\*\*\* Final Examination \*\*\*\*\* December 17 \*\*\*\*\* 2000 - 2200 \*\*\*\*\*

### GRADING POLICY

Your grade will be determined by your performance in the following categories:

1. Attendance and Class Participation

Attendance is **mandatory**. Students will be permitted only one unexcused absence. Each subsequent unexcused absence will result in a reduction of one full point in your letter grade. For example, two unexcused absences during the semester would reduce the final grade of a student who earned an "A" to a "C" grade. Under the same circumstances "C" students would receive an "F". The penalty is this severe because we meet only once a week, and classroom discussion benefits everyone in the class. By missing class you are depriving your fellow students of your opinion. Thus, we are all harmed by your absence.

2. Weekly Journal and Film Analysis

You must keep a weekly journal of your reaction to the films we view. This will be a personal, chronological record of your impressions of the course. It will be a series of dated entries recording significant experiences, insights, or reactions to the topics in the course and the films that amplify them. Your journal entry must be typewritten and presented to the instructor at the beginning of class on the week following the films you review. Consider this a "public" as opposed to a "private" journal which means that it may be shared with other members of the class. Please write with this in mind. The typical journal entry should run about one typed page in length, approximately 250 words.

3. Midterm Examination

We will have only one midterm examination. It will include questions on your knowledge of the lectures, readings, and audio-visual material. We will use the blue book format which means you must purchase at least one blue book and write legibly. The date for the midterm is **October 8**.

4. Final Examination

We will have a non-comprehensive final examination that will focus on the material covered **after** the midterm examination. The format will be identical to the midterm. The final exam will be held in our regular classroom from **2000-2200 on Thursday, December 17**.

5. Term Paper

Part of the learning process in this class involves your ability to apply economic principles to important social issues as seen in major films. To demonstrate mastery of this objective you must complete a term paper on a movie of your choice that illustrates a significant set of economic principles. The paper must deal with a film that is **NOT** covered in this course. You should provide all of the bibliographic data about the film such as date of release, director, major actors and studio as well as a summary of the plot. Following this, you must indicate which economics concept, or set of economics principles are prominent in the film. Finally, you must illustrate your theme with significant examples that demonstrate your knowledge of both economics and film. The paper is due at the beginning of class on **December 3**.

Each element in this course is equally weighted. Each examination is worth 25% of your total grade while the Journal and the Term Paper are also weighted at 25% each.