Critical Thought Around Sustainable Economics Issues:
Debt Levels, Population, ...

READINGS

Instructor: Don Roper  Room 14 Economics Building
Office Hours: after class and in afternoons by appointment

This course concerns the sustainability of debt, in both the domestic economy and international monetary system. Attention will be given to debt crises in the 1930s, the 1980s debt crisis, the near-default of Mexico in 1995, '98 slowdown from the '97 Asian Crisis, the likelihood of further financial instabilities, current monetary policy, vulnerability of the US equities market, IMF efforts to enable developing countries able to pay their external debt and the role of debt in deflationary waves. Most readings can be downloaded from the net, other readings are on reserve in Norlin.

As a supplement to the scheduled class discussions students need to email the 4 word, case insensitive, request
subscribe SE Yourfirstname Yourlastname
To: LISTSERV@csf.colorado.edu

Online Resources:
Students are required to register for the Financial Times.
The most important resource is perhaps Nouriel Roubini's web site.
Other major sites that may be used include

- The Dismal Scientist
- Economagic Data and Graphs
- Finance-Yahoo
- CIA Country Factbook
- IMF World Bank
- Joint Economic Committee
- Federal Reserve Board
- NY Fed (FRBNY)

If financial instabilities manifest themselves during the semester, more current events will be included in the course and resources like The Economist BBC Bloomberg and CNNfn will prove useful.

Evaluation:

Exam I Thursday Sept 28 30%
(Comprehensive) Exam II Thursday Nov 9 30%
Mon Dec 18 10:30-1pm (Sat) Comprehensive Final 40%

An oral exam will be given for anyone who has to miss an exam -- plans need be made before the exam when possible. A genuine understanding of basic analytics (eg, doubling times, balance sheets, percent changes of ratios, dimensions, division by fractions, the algebra of growth rates...) essential for the course will be covered thoroughly in the first two weeks. Material during the first two weeks is a review of the course pre-requisites. Any student who has difficulty with the initial mathematics/algebra should see the instructor about continuing in the course.
As a course in **critical thought**, considerable emphasis is given to the process of critical examination, especially as it occurs in the classroom. Genuine critical thought invariably enhances the learning experience of others and there is no upward bound to the credit that one can receive to their grade from appropriate, thoughtful, reflective class participation. Econ 4999-001, the Fall of Y2000, is committed to encouraging class participation that reflects critical examination of the materials being read. The unambiguous, critical key to the course is **E-N-C-A-C-E-M-E-N-T** with the material understanding, not memorization-and-regurgitation.

It is helpful (mostly for terminology) to have had or to be taking money and banking, a course in the finance dept and/or international affairs. If you do not have such courses in your background please spend more time reading ahead (before lectures) to acquaint yourself with terminology and notation. Persons taking the course pass/fail should read this carefully.

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