International Conflict in the Nuclear Age
Economics 3433 Fall 1990
Instructor: Don Roper
Office hours: 1:30–3:00pm Tue 5:15–6pm MW

This course focuses on several issues of international and intergenerational conflict — the role of interest rates in the allocation of resources between current and future generations, the international debt crisis and its implications for social conflict and deforestation, the question of whether scarce resources and the perception of environmental deterioration leads to international conflict or cooperation.

Grades will be determined by exams or written contributions on the international telecommunication discussion groups depending on the student. Exams will be given (Wednesday) Oct 3, (Mon) Nov 19, and (the final exam, Wed 7:30pm) December 19. They will be given equal weight and the final will be comprehensive with emphasis on the last part. Make-up exams are oral. All students will be required to take the first exam. Students who do well on the first exam or who receive permission from the instructor can elect to complete the remaining two thirds of the course though participation in one or more of the international telecommunication discussion groups. This includes research and writing for various networks including CSF, BIOSPH, ECONOMY, 9NOV89 and other discussion groups. There is no computer prerequisite for the course – all necessary instruction for use of the university’s mainframe computer will be provided. Grades will be enhanced for class participation.

Many of the readings listed below will be available in a packet from Campus Copies. Additional readings will be provided in class for which there will be an assessment probably not exceeding $10.

INTEREST RATES, DEBT, DISCOUNTING AND DEFORESTATION
"Yields, Capitalization Theory, and All That"
"Causes and Consequences of the Debt Crisis"
"How Might Debt Interact with Disinflation to Produce Depression?"
George Anayiotos (speaker) “The Secondary Market for International Debt”
“Interest Rates and the Allocation of Resources Between Generations”
Packet of newspaper articles on the international debt crisis.
Packet of newspaper articles on deforestation for exploring the question of the relation between debt and deforestation – focus on Brazil
Phillip Fearnside – selections from his publications

THE POPULATION QUESTION
Garrett Hardin “Tragedy of the Commons”
Malthus First Essay (selections)
Engels “The Myth of Overpopulation”
Lester Brown “Analyzing the Demographic Trap”
Herman Daly ch 12 of *For the Common Good*
Benjamin Wattenberg selections on “The Birth Dearth”
Robert Repetto – selections from his various publications
Paul Ehrlich – selections from his various publications
Julian Simon – selections from his various publications
short popular articles on population

RESOURCE SCARCITY — CONFLICT OR COOPERATION?
“Economics of the Coming Spaceship Earth” Kenneth Boulding (speaker)
“...Issues Concerning a Stead-State Economy” Herman Daly
“...On Global Modeling” Donella Meadows (MIT Alumni Rev)
“Entropy Law and the Economic Problem” Georgescu-Roegen
packet of articles on ecological problems in socialist countries and the prospects for cooperation and conflict

THE ECONOMIC PARADIGM AND METHODOLOGY
*The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* Thomas Kuhn (selections)
“The Methodology of Positive Economics” Milton Friedman
selections from *The Common Good* by Daly and Cobb
“Review of *The Common Good*”