ECONOMICS HONORS SEMINAR

Economics 4339

Prof. Ann Carlos

Office: Rm 121
Office Hours: T 1.30-3.00pm; R 11.00-12.00am
and by appointment

Spring 1995

Economics 4339 provides a further seminar for economics honors majors. The course is designed to provide you with a forum in which you can discuss some current economic issues, using the theories and methods learnt in prior courses. Because this is a seminar course, each student is expected to have done the required readings and to be ready to enter into the discussions. Each week two or three students will be assigned the task of leading the discussion of the relevant chapter and/or reading. Where Economics 4309 examines a number of micro-economic issues, Economics 4339 focuses on current macro-economic issues. The main books for the course are


Arjo Klamer, ed., Conversations with Economists.

In addition, the course is directed towards helping each honors student write his/her honors thesis. There will, therefore, be required presentation of current work on a regular basis. In addition, each student is expected to submit written drafts of each section or of the full thesis on a regular schedule throughout the semester. To provide some structure for the writing process, we will use


All three books are available in the bookstore.

Students who submit their honors thesis during the Spring semester will receive a grade based on the thesis. Those who are submitting a thesis for a later deadline will receive a grade for the course based on a submitted term paper, class attendance and participation.

Having laid out the rules, I would like to lay out my expectations or objectives. This course provides you with a unique opportunity. It gives you the chance to think about economics and to ask to what extent you agree or disagree with the material you have learned over the past few years. It also gives you the chance to do your own economic analysis on a topic that interests you. My hope is that you will learn that the doing of, as well as the learning of, economics can be both very satisfying and fun.
Course Outline

Jan 17  Introduction: discussion of criteria for honors, advice on the selection of thesis topics and selection of dates for presentations. Introductory discussion of research techniques and timetable for the thesis.

Jan 24  Library visit for those commencing their theses
         Presentation of work in progress for those meeting the Spring deadline.

Jan 31  Carson, Issue 1 - Macroeconomic Instability.
         Romer, "Is Stabilization of the Postwar Economy a Figment of the Data?"
         Wyrick - Chs. 1,2,3.

Feb 7   Carson, Issue 2 - Stabilization and Growth Policy.
         Wyrick - Ch. 4.

         Mankiw, Ch. 16, "Two Views of Government Debt"
         Wyrick - Chs. 5,6.

Feb 21  Carson, Issue 4 - Unemployment.
         Wyrick - Chs. 7,8.

Feb 28  Carson, Issue 6 - The Social Budget.
         Wyrick - Ch. 9.

Mar 1   Carson, Issue 5 - Military Spending.
         Wyrick - Chs.10,11.

Mar 7,14,21  Presentation of final theses.

Apr 4   Conversations - Background

Apr 11  Conversations - Lucas, Sargent, Townsend

April 18 Conversations - Tobin, Blinder, Taylor

April 25 Conversations - Gordon, Rapping