

**The Ohio State University
General Education Curriculum (GEC)
Request for Course Approval Summary Sheet**

1. Academic Unit(s) Submitting Request

Economics

2. Book 3/Registrar's Listing and Number (e.g., Arabic 367, English 110, Natural Resources 222)

ECON 110.02

3. GEC areas(s) for which course is to be considered (e.g., Category 4. Social Science, Section A. Individuals and Groups; and Category 6. Diversity Experiences, Section B. International Issues, Non-Western or Global Course)

Category 4; Social Sciences, part C, Human, Natural and Economic Resources

4. Attach:

- A statement as to how this course meets the general principles of the GEC Model Curriculum and the specific goals of the category(ies) for which it is being proposed;
- An assessment plan for the course; and
- The syllabus, which should include the category(ies) that it satisfies and objectives which state how this course meets the goals/objectives of the specific GEC category(ies).

5. Proposed Effective Date Spring 2006

6. If your unit has faculty members on any of the regional campuses, have they been consulted? Yes

7. Select the appropriate descriptor for this GEC request:

- Existing course with no changes to the *Course Offerings Bulletin* information. Required documentation is this GEC summary sheet and the course syllabus.
- Existing course with changes to the *Course Offerings Bulletin* information. Required documentation is this GEC summary sheet, the course change request, and the course syllabus.
- New course. Required documentation is this summary sheet, the new course request, and the course syllabus.

For ASC units, after approval by the academic unit, the documentation should be forwarded to the ASC Curriculum Office for consideration by the appropriate college curriculum committee and the Arts and Sciences Committee on Curriculum and Instruction (CCI). For other units, the course should be approved by the unit, college curriculum committee, and college office, if applicable, before forwarding to the ASC Curriculum Office. E-mail the syllabi and supporting documentation to ascurofc@osu.edu.

9. Approval Signatures


Academic Unit

5-30-06

Date

College Office/College Curriculum Committee

Date

Colleges of the Arts and Sciences Committee on Curriculum and Instruction

Date

Office of Academic Affairs

Date

Course GEC Statement:

Economics 110.02 is a GEC course in Arts and Sciences, Social Sciences, Category: Human, Natural and Economic Resources. Economics 110.02 has been designed with the general learning objectives of the social sciences in mind. The readings, class discussions, and exams will further students' abilities:

- To understand the behavior of individuals, in particular responses to incentives, and society as a whole in the formation of institutions.
- To appreciate theories and methods of social scientific inquiry, their broad applications, and limitation.
- To comprehend differences in average outcomes due to social, economic, geographic and demographic factors.
- To assess individual and social values and recognize their importance in social problem solving and policymaking.

Economics 110.02 falls under the rubric Human, Natural, and Economic Resources (such as land, labor, capital, population, and the environment). The rubric includes subtopics: Use, Distribution/Diffusion, Allocation, Exchange, Decision-Making, Policies, and Global Interdependence.

Economics 110.02 fits directly into this category by addressing these main topics and subtopics within the course content. Economics 110.02 covers essential economic principles, reflecting the discipline it represents. These principles are representative of the learning objectives above. They include:

- The economic behavior of individuals—responses to incentives and disincentives.
- The principles of microeconomics—decision making by households and firms.
- The allocation of scarce resources by individuals, groups, and society.
- The factors of production: land, labor, capital, and entrepreneurship—their acquisition and use.
- The analysis of supply and demand, prices, and markets, and the use of models are representations of the real world.

Economics 110.02 presents this subject matter with examples from Steven Levitt and Stephen Dubner's bestseller, *Freakonomics*. These examples reinforce traditional economic principles, allowing the course to meet the general principles of the GEC model curriculum, and the specific goals of the categories and subcategories. Examples include:

- Why do economists expect schoolteachers to cheat, sumo wrestling to be rigged, and MLB players to use steroids?
- Even fanatical terrorists can be rational.
- Why do crack dealers risk life and limb for no more than fast-food wages?
- Did the Brady Bill or *Roe v. Wade* play a greater role in the drop in violent crime rates?
- What matters more: who your parents are or what they do?
- Are distinctively black names the cause or merely the consequence of poverty?

GEC Course Assessment

This survey is intended to provide feedback to your instructor about the extent to which this course achieves the goals of its GEC category. Please fill out this short survey and return it.

Legend:

Strongly Disagree	1
Somewhat Disagree	2
Neutral—Neither Agree nor Disagree	3
Somewhat Agree	4
Strongly Agree	5

This course assisted me in learning and understanding fundamental economic principles.

1 2 3 4 5

This course increased my understanding of economics enough that I might use the theories learned to make decisions in my professional and personal (as a voter, parent, etc.) lives.

1 2 3 4 5

This course provided me with a deeper understanding of the impact of incentives on market and nonmarket transactions

1 2 3 4 5

This course showed me how economic reasoning can be applied to analyze a broad range of problems.

1 2 3 4 5

Because of this course, I will be more skeptical when I hear or see statistics in the news.

1 2 3 4 5

Economics 110.02: *Freakonomics*

Quarter	Lecturer: Dr. Molly Malloy Cooper
Days & Time	E-mail: cooper.338@osu.edu
Classroom	Office: Arps Hall
	Phone:
	Office Hours: TBD

Course Objectives

The purpose of this course is to apply economic reasoning to analyze contemporary social issues. This course will investigate the controversial findings of economist Steven Levitt and journalist Stephen Dubner in their bestseller, *Freakonomics*. Students will learn the economic principles behind their findings and discuss related issues in the economics of sports, crime, education, poverty and welfare, etc. This course fulfills the Human, Natural, and Economic Resources Social Science General Education Requirement.

Course GEC Statement:

Economics 110.02 is a GEC course in Arts and Sciences, Social Sciences, Category: Human, Natural and Economic Resources. Economics 110.02 has been designed with the general learning objectives of the social sciences in mind. The readings, class discussions, and exams will further students' abilities:

- To understand the behavior of individuals, in particular responses to incentives, and society as a whole in the formation of institutions.
- To appreciate theories and methods of social scientific inquiry, their broad applications, and limitation.
- To comprehend differences in average outcomes due to social, economic, geographic and demographic factors.
- To assess individual and social values and recognize their importance in social problem solving and policymaking.

Economics 110.02 falls under the rubric Human, Natural, and Economic Resources (such as land, labor, capital, population, and the environment). The rubric includes subtopics: Use, Distribution/Diffusion, Allocation, Exchange, Decision-Making, Policies, and Global Interdependence.

Economics 110.02 fits directly into this category by addressing these main topics and subtopics within the course content. Economics 110.02 covers essential economic principles, reflecting the discipline it represents. These principles are representative of the learning objectives above. They include:

- The economic behavior of individuals—responses to incentives and disincentives.
- The principles of microeconomics—decision making by households and firms.
- The allocation of scarce resources by individuals, groups, and society.
- The factors of production: land, labor, capital, and entrepreneurship—their acquisition and use.
- The analysis of supply and demand, prices, and markets, and the use of models are representations of the real world.

Economics 110.02 presents this subject matter with examples from Steven Levitt and Stephen Dubner's bestseller, *Freakonomics*. These examples reinforce traditional economic principles, allowing the course to meet the general principles of the GEC model curriculum, and the specific goals of the categories and subcategories. Examples include:

- Why do economists expect schoolteachers to cheat, sumo wrestling to be rigged, and MLB players to use steroids?
- Even fanatical terrorists can be rational.
- Why do crack dealers risk life and limb for no more than fast-food wages?
- Did the Brady Bill or *Roe v. Wade* play a greater role in the drop in violent crime rates?
- What matters more: who your parents are or what they do?
- Are distinctively black names the cause or merely the consequence of poverty?

Course Material

Required Textbooks:

Stephen D. Levitt and Stephen Dubner. *Freakonomics*. (HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 2005)

Robert C. Guell. *Issues in Economics Today*, 3rd ed., (The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., 2007)

An outline of class notes and additional materials will be available on the course website on CARMEN. **The outlines are not meant to serve as a substitute for attending class lectures.** Other materials also may be distributed in class.

Course Requirements

You are required to take a two midterm exams and a final. The first midterm will be given in class during Week 4. The second midterm will be given in class during Week 7. The final exam will be held in accordance with the university common schedule. The format of these exams will be short answer essay.

Grading

Your final grade will be calculated using the following weights:

Midterm 1 in class during Week 4	30%
Midterm 2 in class during Week 8	30%
Final Exam in accordance with university scheduling	40%

The Grading scale will be the OSU Standard Scheme.

Contacting Me

The best way to reach me outside office hours is via e-mail. If you do not have access to e-mail, and you need to get a message to me quickly, you can call the Economics Department office at 292-6701 during normal business hours.

Course Outline:

Week 1: Administrative and Introduction and Some Theory Background

- Opportunity costs
- Incentives
- Supply & Demand
- Elasticities
- Production, Cost, and Profit

Guell: Chapters 1 & 2

Freakonomics: “Introduction: **The Hidden Side of Everything**”

Week 2: More Theory and The Economics of Sports

- Production, Cost, and Profit
- Incentives and Cheating (Sumo wrestlers, figure skaters, steroids in MLB)
- Why do poor cities subsidize wealthy sports’ team owners?
- An analysis of ticket scalping

Guell: Chapters 4 and 30—“Ticket Brokers and Ticket Scalping” & 34—“If We Build It, Will They come? And Other Sports Questions”

Freakonomics: Chapter 1—“What Do Schoolteachers and Sumo Wrestlers Have in Common?”

Week 3: Asymmetric Information and Terrorism

- The **impact of asymmetric information on interactions** such as real estate transactions, internet dating, and coffin shopping
- The “**Rational**” Terrorist model

Guell: Chapter 41—“The Economics of Terrorism”

Freakonomics: Chapter 2—“How Is the Ku Klux Klan Like a Group of Real Estate Agents?”

Week 4: Review for and take **Midterm 1** (30% of final grade)

Week 5: The markets for vices.

- Why we tax and regulate alcohol and tobacco, but prohibit prostitution and nonprescription narcotics.
- The economic impact of drug decriminalization.
- Are casinos the answer to economic stagnation?
- How crack gangs resemble corporate America

Guell: Chapters 16—"Tobacco, Alcohol, Drugs, and Prostitution" and 40—"The Economic Impact of Casino Gambling"

Freakonomics: Chapter 3—"Why Do Drug Dealers Still Live with Their Moms?"

Week 6: Crime and Punishment

- The rational criminal model
- Optimal enforcement and sentencing
- Differences in criminality and victimization by socioeconomic demographics
- The death penalty debate

Guell: Chapter 21—"The Economics of Crime"

Freakonomics: Chapter 4—"Where Have All the Criminals Gone?"

Week 7: Children are our Future

- School funding
- The role of parents in educational outcomes
- The tenure system
- Is Head Start a worthwhile investment?
- Can competition save the public schools?
- Is college a worthwhile investment?

Guell: Chapters 22—"Education" & 25—"Head Start"

Freakonomics: Chapter 5—"What Makes a Perfect Parent?"

Week 8: Review for and take **Midterm 2** (30% of final grade)

Week 9: What matters more: who your parents are or what they do?

- Intergenerational poverty
- Race and labor market outcomes

Guell: Chapters 24—"Poverty and Welfare" and Chapter 26—"The Economics of Race and Sex Discrimination"

Freakonomics: Chapter 6—"Perfect Parenting, Part II...."

Week 10: Course Wrap up and review, additional current economic issues

FINAL EXAM in accordance with the university common schedule.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is essential to maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in teaching, research, and other educational and scholarly activities. It is expected that all students at The Ohio State University have read and understand the University's *Code of Student Conduct*, and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. Students must recognize that failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the University's *Code of Student Conduct* and this syllabus may constitute "Academic Misconduct."

The Ohio State University's *Code of Student Conduct* (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: "Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process." Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination.

Ignorance of the University's *Code of Student Conduct* is never considered an "excuse" for academic misconduct, so I recommend that you review the *Code of Student Conduct* and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct.

If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by University Rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. If COAM determines that you have violated the University's *Code of Student Conduct* (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the University.

If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact me.

Other sources of information on academic misconduct (integrity) to which you can refer include:

The Committee on Academic Misconduct web pages (oaa.osu.edu/coam/home.html)

Ten Suggestions for Preserving Academic Integrity
(oaa.osu.edu/coam/ten-suggestions.html)

Eight Cardinal Rules of Academic Integrity (www.northwestern.edu/uacc/8cards.html)

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at 614-292-3307 in room 150 Pomerene Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.