

1 Course Description

The popular conception of economists is that we use models to describe monetary transactions. While monetary transactions are still the bread and butter of economics, many economists have applied economics to unique fields including dating, crime, and even baseball. Why baseball? The industry has a clear structure. On field decisions are made under a known set of rules. Baseball players are employees whose productivity data has been published for every game played in over 100 years. Their salaries are publicly available and negotiations are often public. We will discuss topics from why more batters get hit by pitches in the National league to the beginnings of the *Moneyball* revolution.

2 Course Goals

The goals of this course are to learn some of the basic tools used by economists, how those tools can be used to explain aspects of baseball, and to have fun.

3 Course Materials

Required Text: *The Baseball Economist*, Author: J.C. Bradbury

4 Course Requirements and Grading

The weighting of grades is always determined by the syllabus. Mistakes on Carmen are unlikely, but any discrepancy will go to the syllabus.

- **Attendance and Participation (25%):** You are expected to attend every class and participate in class discussions. Participation will be evaluated based on both attendance and active participation in class.
- **Reading and Class Preparation (25%):** You will be assigned a weekly reading, typically from *The Baseball Economist*. Prior to each class you are required to submit a summary of the reading. The summaries will be submitted through Carmen and many will include writing prompts or questions for you to consider.
- **Current Events (10%):** Each week 1 to 2 students will be assigned a current event. To complete a current event you must find some media (article, video, podcast, etc.) that you can relate to economics and baseball. Then you write up a summary of the article and submit the summary on Carmen. During class you will share your summary of the article.

- **Final presentation (40%):** At the end of the semester every student will prepare and present a 3-5 minute presentation. Half way through the semester, you will need to share your basic idea with the class. The presentation should be an investigation into some aspect of professional baseball from an economic perspective. The presentation should present a question and then answer the question with economic thought and/or data.

Letter Grade Distribution:

>= 93	A	73 - 76	C
90 - 92	A-	70 - 72	C-
87 - 89	B+	67 - 69	D+
83 - 86	B	60 - 66	D
80 - 82	B-	<= 59	F
77 - 79	C+		

5 Help with coursework:

Short questions can always be answered by email. I guarantee all emails received prior to 5:00 pm will be answered that day. I have 5 hours per week of designated office hours. If you are struggling, come to office hours immediately. If you have a schedule conflict that prevents you from attending any of the office hours, arrangements may be made to meet at alternate times.

6 Academic Integrity:

Cheating will not be tolerated. Any incident of academic misconduct will be reported all consequences pursuant to the Ohio State University code of conduct will be pursued. Academic misconduct is described in the code of conduct as follows:¹

Academic misconduct: 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:

1. Violation of course rules as contained in the course syllabus or other information provided to the student
2. Knowingly providing or receiving information during examinations such as course examinations and candidacy examinations; or the possession and/or use of unauthorized materials during those examinations
3. Knowingly providing or using unauthorized assistance in the laboratory, on field work, in scholarship or on a course assignment;
4. Submitting plagiarized work for an academic requirement. Plagiarism is the representation of another's work or ideas as one's own; it includes the unacknowledged word-for-word use and/or paraphrasing of another person's work, and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas

¹<http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/csc/>

5. Submitting substantially the same work to satisfy requirements for one course or academic requirement that has been submitted in satisfaction of requirements for another course or academic requirement without permission of the instructor of the course for which the work is being submitted or supervising authority for the academic requirement
6. Falsification, fabrication, or dishonesty in creating or reporting laboratory results, research results, and/or any other assignments
7. Serving as, or enlisting the assistance of, a substitute for a student in any graded assignments
8. Alteration of grades or marks by the student in an effort to change the earned grade or credit
9. Alteration of academically related university forms or records, or unauthorized use of those forms or records
10. Engaging in activities that unfairly place other students at a disadvantage, such as taking, hiding or altering resource material, or manipulating a grading system
11. Violation of program regulations as established by departmental committees and made available to students.

7 Disability Services:

”If you have a documented disability, please register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations, so they may be implemented in a timely fashion. If you have any questions about this process, please contact Disability Services at 614-292-3307 or sllds@osu.edu.”²

²<http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/faculty-staff/syllabus-statement/>

Readings and Topics List

This calendar is a rough outline of topics to be covered.

Week	Content
Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand • Reading assignment: Chapter 1 Accidents Happen
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity Costs • Reading assignment: Chapter 3 Left Handed Catchers
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rent Seeking • Reading assignment: Chapter 4 Lobbying Balls and Strikes
Week 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand for Winning and Competitive Balance • Reading assignment: Chapter 6: The Big City vs. Small City Problem
Week 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Game Theory and Strategic Interactions • Reading assignment: Chapter 9: The Steroids Game
Week 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximization • Developing your presentation • Sharing Project Ideas
Week 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using data to test theory I • Reading assignment: Chapter 10: Innovating to Win
Week 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using data to test theory II • Reading assignment: Chapter 11: Scouts vs. Stat-Heads
Week 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Productivity • Reading assignment: Chapter 12: How to Judge a Hitter or a Pitcher
Week 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labor Markets • Reading assignment: Chapter 13: What is a Ballplayer Worth?
Week 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market Structures • Reading assignment: Chapter 14: Is Major League Baseball a Monopoly?
Week 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations
Week 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations