

AEM 2000: Contemporary Controversies in the Global Economy

Spring 2012 Syllabus

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Lecture: T/R 10:10-11:00, Warren 345
Sections: R: 12:20-1:10, Kennedy 103
R 1:25-2:15, Kennedy 103
F: 12:20-1:10, Kennedy 103
F: 1:25-2:15, Kennedy 103

TEACHING ASSISTANTS:

Graduate TAs: Richard Klotz (rlk99@cornell.edu) and Beth Spink (ems352@cornell.edu)

Undergraduate TAs: Charlotte Ambrozek (cea56@cornell.edu), James Bor (kjb86@cornell.edu), Shilpita Chattopadhyay(sc823@cornell.edu), Ivi Demi (id63@cornell.edu) and Simone Passarelli (sap78@cornell.edu).

COURSE OBJECTIVE:

This course aims to stimulate critical thinking, economic reasoning and cogent writing about contemporary controversies that attract regular attention in the international press and among key private and public sector decision-makers. Students read and discuss competing arguments about current issues such as morally questionable market exchange among willing buyers and sellers, immigration policy, foreign aid and sovereign debt forgiveness. Students write, edit and rewrite short briefing papers which are evaluated for quality of communication as well as subject matter content. Priority given to AEM majors, in particular sophomores and juniors, but all majors welcomed.

COURSE PREREQUISITES:

Required: ECON 1110 (introductory microeconomics) and Freshman Writing Seminars completed.

READINGS:

There is no textbook. The course relies mainly on my lecture notes, available on the course website, handouts provided in class, and on papers and media clips posted on the course web site. A packet of key readings is available from the Campus Store. You are not required to purchase the course packet. It is provided solely for the convenience of those who want hard copies of all the key readings. All of the materials in that packet - and much more - are available on the course web site.

Note: students do, however, need an i>clicker, which can be purchased at the Cornell Store or online.

HOME PAGE:

The course home page is on Blackboard. The page provides you with announcements, information about the course, links to the syllabus, lecture notes, useful web sites, current grades, and all the usual, good things available on Blackboard sites. I strongly recommend that you check the course web site frequently during the semester, especially for announcements prior to class. My lecture notes are always posted prior to class so that you don't need to copy down anything from the presentations and can focus instead on thinking critically about the material and participating actively in the class discussion.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

I strictly enforce Cornell's Code of Academic Integrity. I strongly encourage you to discuss course material with your classmates outside of class. However, the written work you turn in must be entirely your own. At a minimum, a violation of the code of academic integrity will result in a failing course grade.

Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site.

GRADES AND POINT ALLOCATION:

There is no "curve" in this class; you are not competing against your classmates. Grades will be based on total points earned, with 97-100% an A+, 93-96% an A, 90-92% an A-, 87-89% a B+, etc. Points will be allocated as follows:

<u>Exercise</u>	<u>Points</u>
Executive briefing papers: first drafts (4)	24%
Executive briefing papers: final drafts (4)	36%
Executive briefing papers: editorial contributions (4)	12%
Impromptu position notes (4)	16%
Course participation	12%

There are no examinations or term papers in this course. No extensions are granted. All briefing papers, peer edits and impromptu position notes must be turned in at the start of lecture on the due date. Late or missed assignments will receive a grade of zero. If you know you will have a conflict with a due - due to a job interview, family event, athletic travel or other reason - make arrangements with me in advance.

EXECUTIVE BRIEFING PAPERS:

Executive briefing papers of 500-1000 words are the principal means by which we evaluate your learning and performance. In the first week of class you will get a detailed handout on what constitutes a good executive briefing paper (EBP): how to present a logical and well-supported argument and how to do so clearly and concisely. Papers will be evaluated for both content and composition. We will occasionally discuss and critique writing styles in lecture; this will be a common activity in sections.

Because one learns not only by writing, but also by attentive reading and thoughtful editing, you will each edit/comment on classmates' briefs as well. The peer editing occurs through the PeerMark plug-in within the Turnitin utility on the course Blackboard site. You will be evaluated on both your own briefs and your editorial contributions to others' briefs. We grade both first and final drafts as well as your editorial contributions to your classmates' briefs.

I hand out the next briefing paper assignment on the first day of each new module. Your first draft is due one week later (see the schedule below). All EBP drafts and peer edits get submitted via the Assignments\Executive Briefing Papers folder of the course Blackboard site. Note that the deadlines are absolute; the site will not accept submissions after the listed deadline. Your first draft brief will be marked-up and graded by a TA and peer-edited by a classmate. A few days later (usually one week, see calendar below) you turn in your peer edit of the draft brief you were assigned to peer edit for your classmate. Your peer edits will be returned to the author of the original draft brief as well as graded by a TA. The final draft of your briefing paper is due by the start of class on the first day of the next module - for the last module, on the first day after classes end. You will always get your graded final draft back within two weeks (usually within one). In order to reinforce core lessons of this course - that good writing requires regular revision, and that one should tap good feedback when revising - each student may further

rewrite one EBP "final" draft for a regrade in place of the final EBP grade received. That rewrite/regrade is due by noon on Friday, May 11 via email to Prof. Barrett. The grade on this regraded EBP replaces the final grade received. There is no guarantee the grade will increase; indeed, without a concerted effort to improve the paper, your grade may fall.

The schedule of briefing paper assignments is: **Due dates (always by 1000 AM Eastern time):**

Briefing Paper Number	Handed out	1st draft	Peer edits	Final draft
1: Obnoxious Markets	Feb 7	Feb 16	Feb 21	Feb 28
2: Immigration Policy	Feb 28	Mar 8	Mar 15	Mar 27
3: Foreign Aid	Mar 27	Apr 5	Apr 10	Apr 17
4: Sovereign Debt	Apr 17	Apr 26	May 1	May 8

The John S. Knight Institute for Writing in the Disciplines offers a Writing in the Majors Prize - with cash prizes! - each semester to the students who author the best papers in a writing-in-the-majors course (such as AEM2000). I can and usually do nominate several papers.

IMPROMPTU POSITION NOTES:

One routinely needs to formulate a position on an issue quickly. Clear and convincing articulation of a position in a matter of minutes is a learned skill. Toward that end, the last lecture meeting of each module will begin with a ten minute short writing assignment. You will be given a brief question and asked to write your position on the issue at hand. Three students will then be asked to read their position note verbatim (i.e., no extemporizing) so as to initiate a class discussion. Each student's written impromptu position note will be turned in and graded for clarity, logic and quality of exposition. A set of candidate questions will be handed out at the start of each new module.

OFFICE HOURS:

Prof. Barrett's regular office hours are Tuesdays 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM and Thursdays 11:15 AM - 12:15 PM in 435 Warren Hall. During office hours, I always drop whatever I am doing to address your concerns. Outside those times, please feel free to email questions to me at any time or to call for an appointment. Please also feel free to drop by my office any time, but please understand that I am often out of the office or busy and unable to visit with you right away outside of office hours. So I may have to ask you to come back later.

TA Office hours will be held in Warren 336. The exact days and times will be determined by the end of the first full week of classes and will be posted on the course web site under Announcements and on the Staff Information page.

COURSE OUTLINE:

The course is comprised of four modules, each comprised of six lecture periods and three sections. Three modules are set. The class will decide the fourth from among several options by written secret ballot the second week of class (i.e., once add/drop changes have settled down a bit).

The general pattern within each module runs as follows. In the first three lectures I offer a two-part overview, presenting the economic logic, ethical principles and empirical evidence underpinning various perspectives on the question(s) under consideration. In the next two lecture periods, we hear from one or two guest lecturers and/or watch a video on the topic. In these lectures and videos, we try to expose you to a range of conflicting arguments and varied perspectives on the topic under discussion. At the sixth lecture meeting, students will be presented with an issue other than the one covered in the executive

briefing paper assignment and given an impromptu position note writing assignment. Three such notes will be read verbatim and we will discuss the issue as a class.

Weekly sections are run by the TAs. The first two weeks will focus on basic writing and oral presentation skills, on which exercises in the course depend. After the first two weeks, sections are focused on the current module, with three meetings per module. The first section of each module involves in-class response to the executive briefing paper assignment for the module. The second section focuses on review and discussion of readings related to the impromptu position note assignment for the module. The final section meeting of each module returns to the EBP and students' feedback on first drafts to try to help refine ideas and presentation. Although section attendance is not mandatory, history suggests that course grades are strongly correlated with participation in section, both directly through the course participation grade and indirectly through improved performance on written exercises.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Week #:Dates	Tuesday	Thursday	Section
1: Jan 23-27	Introduction - Part I	Introduction - Part II	Writing skills
2: Jan 30- Feb 3	Introduction - Part III	Introduction - Part IV	Writing skills
<u>Module 1: Obnoxious Markets</u>			
3: Feb 6-10	Lecture I	Lecture II	EBP discussion
4: Feb 13-17	Lecture III	GL: George Hay	IPN topics
5: Feb 20-24	Movie: Modern Slavery	IPN and discussion	EBP discussion II
<u>Module 2: Immigration Policy</u>			
6: Feb 27- Mar 2	No class **	Lecture I	EBP discussion
7: Mar 5-9	Lecture II	Lecture III	IPN topics
8: Mar 12-16	GL: Vernon Briggs	IPN and discussion	EBP discussion II
Mar 19-23	No class (Spring break)	No class (Spring break)	No class(Spring break)
<u>Module 3: Foreign Aid</u>			
9: Mar 26-30	Lecture I	Lecture II	EBP discussion
10: Apr 2-6	Lecture III	GL: Nic van de Walle	IPN topics
11: Apr 9-13	GL: Ravi Kanbur	IPN and discussion	EBP discussion II
<u>Module 4: Sovereign Debt</u>			
12: Apr 16-20	GL: Edith Liu	Lecture I	EBP discussion
13: Apr 23-27	Lecture II	Lecture III	IPN topics
14: Apr 30 - May 4	GL: Bob Hockett	IPN and discussion	EBP discussion II

GL = Guest lecturer or movie

TBD = to be determined

** Prof. Barrett has to be out of town this day and we unfortunately need to cancel class.