

**AEM 2000: Contemporary Controversies in the Global Economy**  
Fall 2018 Syllabus

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Lecture: M/W 11:15-12:05, 151 Warren Hall  
Sections: R: 12:20-1:10, 138 Warren Hall  
R 1:25-2:15, 113 Warren Hall  
F: 12:20-1:10, 113 Warren Hall  
F 1:25-2:15, 113 Warren Hall

**TEACHING ASSISTANTS:**

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**COURSE OBJECTIVE:**

This course aims to stimulate critical thinking, economic reasoning, and cogent writing about contemporary controversies in the global economy that attract regular attention in the national and 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, corporate social responsibility, genetically modified foods, intellectual property rights, foreign aid, or sovereign debt forgiveness. Students write, edit, and rewrite short executive briefing papers that advance a persuasive argument, as well as short, impromptu position notes written in class in timed exercises. All writing is evaluated for quality of communication as well as subject matter content. Priority is given to AEM majors, in particular to sophomores and juniors, but all majors are welcome.

The Dyson School learning outcomes achieved in this course are (i) students will demonstrate proficiency in written communication, (ii) students will demonstrate competency in analysis of ethical problems in business or economics in both domestic and international contexts, (iii) students will be able to identify and analyze evidence pertaining to business and economics problems in society and communicate results, (iv) students will develop an awareness and understanding of the cultural issues that impact business operations in a global society, (v) students will be able to demonstrate familiarity with major business and economics issues facing a firm and society, and (vi) students will demonstrate ability to offer critical analysis of a variety of contemporary business issues.

**COURSE PREREQUISITES:**

Required: ECON 1110 (introductory microeconomics) and a First Year Writing Seminar (or equivalent) completed.

**READINGS:**

There is no textbook. The course relies mainly on lecture notes, available on the course website, handouts provided in class, and on papers and media clips posted on the course web site.

**COURSE BLACKBOARD SITE:**

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 active Blackboard sites. You should check the course web site frequently during the semester, especially for announcements prior to class. Lecture notes are always posted prior to class so that you don't need to copy down any posted material from the presentations and can focus instead on thinking critically about the material, taking supplementary notes that enhance your comprehension, and participating actively in the class discussion. Course materials posted on Blackboard are intellectual property belonging to the author(s), Prof. Barrett when not otherwise indicated. Students are not permitted to buy or sell any course materials without the author(s)' written permission. Any such unauthorized behavior constitutes academic misconduct.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**

We strictly enforce Cornell's Code of Academic Integrity. We 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. A useful tutorial on avoiding plagiarism can be found at <http://plagiarism.arts.cornell.edu/tutorial/index.cfm>. You should work through the exercises there on your own time to familiarize yourself with the particulars of Cornell's Code.

### **GRADES AND POINT ALLOCATION:**

There is no "curve" in this class; you are not competing against 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 of a conflict with a due date – because of a job interview, family event, athletic travel or other reason – make arrangements with Prof. Barrett *in advance*.

S/U policy: Students may take the course on an S/U basis. But in order to receive an S grade, a student must earn a C- or better, and must also turn in first drafts and peer edits in each of the four course modules. Failure to turn in a first draft or peer edit hurts a classmate and inconveniences TAs, and therefore results in an automatic U.

Grading writing is necessarily subjective. You may appeal a grade by giving me the graded exercise along with a written, substantive explanation as to why you think the grade is incorrect/unfair. I entertain appeals only within one week of when the graded exercises are made available to you. I read and regrade the exercise myself; your grade may go up or down. By requesting a regrade, you accept replacement of the original grade with the regrade.

### **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 persuasive, 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 is a primary 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. 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.

We hand out the next briefing paper assignment on the first day of each new module. Your first draft is typically due one week later (see the schedule below). Turn in **two stapled hard copies** (one for a classmate to edit, one for the TA to edit and grade). Those who do not turn in two stapled copies will automatically lose 3 points on the first draft grade. A few days later (usually one week, see calendar below) you need to turn in **two stapled hard copies** of your edits of your classmate's draft brief (one for the author, one for grading by a TA). Again, failure to turn in two stapled copies will cost you 3 points on the peer edit grade. One copy of the final draft of your briefing paper is due at the start of class on the first day of the next module (for the last module, by 12 noon on the Friday

after classes end), accompanied by the two edited copies of your first draft (one from a TA, one from a peer editor). You will get your graded final draft back within ten days (usually within one week). In order to reinforce core lessons of this course – that good writing requires regular revision, and that one should tap into good feedback when revising – each student may further rewrite one EBP final draft for a regrade. Note that first drafts cannot be replaced since the final draft effectively did so already. That one rewrite/regrade is due no later than December 10 to Prof. Barrett, and must be accompanied by the graded version of the final draft of the EBP being revised. The grade on this regraded EBP replaces the final grade received. There is no guarantee the grade will increase; without a sincere effort to improve the paper, the grade may fall.

The schedule of briefing paper assignments is:

**Due dates (always by the start of class at 11:15 AM Eastern time):**

<b>Briefing Paper Number</b>	<b>Handed out</b>	<b>1st draft</b>	<b>Peer edits</b>	<b>Final draft</b>
1: Obnoxious Markets	Sep 12	Sep 19	Sep 26	Oct 1
2: Immigration Policy	Oct 1	Oct 10	Oct 17	Oct 24
3: Genetically Modified Foods	Oct 24	Oct 31	Nov 7	Nov 14
4: Corporate Social Responsibility	Nov 14	Nov 26	Dec 3	Dec 7 (12 noon)

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 AEM 2000). I can and usually do nominate several papers. Many semesters, at least one AEM2000 nominee wins a prize.

**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 an important, 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. The second discussion section of each module is devoted to discussing those topics.

**COURSE PARTICIPATION:**

The purpose of course participation assessment is to encourage you to help your classmates learn by sharing your critical thinking. We learn in community. The instructional team will assess the frequency and quality of your contributions to other students’ learning in lectures and sections. We assess quality as the extent to which your comments help other students in the course to learn by introducing, clarifying or constructively criticizing particular positions. We provide a mid-semester informal assessment to each student to provide a sense of our collective assessment of your contributions to the classroom discussions to that point.

**OFFICE HOURS:**

Prof. Barrett’s regular office hours are Mondays 1:00-3:00 PM in 340D Warren Hall. During office hours, I always drop whatever I am doing to address your concerns. Outside of those times, please feel free to email questions to me or to email me to arrange an appointment. Feel free to drop by my office any time, but please understand that I may not be available to visit with you right away outside of office hours. You might have to come back later.

TA Office hours and locations will be announced on the course Blackboard site the first week of classes. At least one member of the instructional team is available every weekday, so please drop by if you have questions, need to talk through assignments, etc.

**COURSE OUTLINE:**

The course is comprised of one introductory and four topical modules, the latter each comprised of five or six lecture periods and two or three sections.

After the introductory module, the general pattern within each topical module runs as follows. Over the course of 3-5 lectures we offer an overview, presenting the economic logic, ethical principles, and empirical evidence underpinning various perspectives on the question(s) under consideration. We may also hear from a guest lecturer and/or watch a video on the topic at some point during a module, in order to expose you to a range of conflicting arguments and varied perspectives on the topic under discussion. Guest lecturers also offer the chance to connect with an interesting expert on the subject. At the last lecture meeting of each module, an in-class impromptu position note writing assignment addresses an issue other than the one covered in the executive briefing paper assignment. Three such notes will be read verbatim and we discuss the issue as a class.

Weekly sections are run by the graduate TAs. The first two weeks focus on basic writing skills, on which course assignments course depend heavily. Even students who are confident in their writing skills should attend those sections. Many years of experience indicate that most students learn useful tips that substantially improve their performance in this course (and beyond). After the introductory weeks, sections focus on the current module. The first section of each module involves an in-class response to the executive briefing paper assignment for that module. The second section focuses on review and discussion of readings related to the impromptu position note assignment for that module. If there is a third section meeting in the module, it returns to the EBP and students' feedback on first drafts so as to help refine ideas and presentation prior to final revisions. 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. So regular attendance at section is strongly encouraged.

**COURSE SCHEDULE:**

Note: sections do not meet until after the first lecture

<b>Week #: Dates</b>	<b>Monday Lecture</b>	<b>Wednesday Lecture</b>	<b>Thur/Fri Section</b>
Aug 27-31	Introduction – Part I	Introduction – Part II	Writing skills
Sep 3-7	<i>Labor Day – no class</i>	Introduction – Part III	Writing skills
Sep 10-14	Introduction – Part IV	----	----
<b><u>Module 1: Obnoxious Markets</u></b>			
Sep 10-14	----	Lecture I	EBP discussion
Sep 17-21	Lecture II	Lecture III	IPN topics
Sep 24-28	Lecture IV	IPN and discussion	EBP discussion II
<b><u>Module 2: Immigration Policy</u></b>			
Oct 1-5	Lecture I	Lecture II	EBP discussion
Oct 8-12	<i>Fall break – no class</i>	Lecture III	IPN topics
Oct 15-19	GL: Mary Jo Dudley	Lecture IV	EBP discussion II
Oct 22-26	IPN and discussion	----	----
<b><u>Module 3: Genetically Modified Foods</u></b>			
Oct 22-26	----	Lecture I	EBP discussion
Oct 29-Nov 2	Lecture II	GL: Tony Shelton	IPN topics
Nov 5-9	Lecture III	Lecture IV	EBP discussion II
Nov 12-16	IPN and discussion	----	----
<b><u>Module 4: Corporate Social Responsibility</u></b>			
Nov 12-16	----	Lecture I	EBP discussion
Nov 19-23	Lecture II	<i>Thanksgiving: no class</i>	<i>Thanksgiving: no class</i>
Nov 26-30	Lecture III	GL: John Tobin	IPN topics
Dec 3-7	IPN and discussion	<i>Classes ended</i>	<i>Classes ended</i>

GL = Guest lecturer