Economics 3620: Natural Resource and Environmental Economics
Winter 2017, Pigott 100, Mon and Wed 3:45 – 5:50 PM

Dr. Benjamin Fissel
508 Pigott Hall
Phone: 206-384-9483
E-mail: fisselb@seattleu.edu
Office Hours: Mon and Wed, 6:00 – 7:00 PM, or by appointment
Check Canvas for online course information.

REQUIRED TEXT
• There will be many other readings provided by the instructor.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Through this course you will learn to apply economic principles and reasoning to environmental issues and policies. The management of environmental and natural resources (such as air, water, minerals, and fish) is an important topic for policy makers, industry and to consumers. The application of economic principles to these problems can provide insight into how to balance societies objectives of human well-being, growth, and environmental sustainability and how policy can be designed to better preserve and/or develop these resources efficiently. Over the last decade (or more) the opportunity for jobs related to the analysis and management of the environment has increased dramatically, and a central objective of this course will be to prepare you with the tools to approach these problems from and economic perspective. Students will read and discuss material from the text and articles on environmental and natural resource economic topics, including: benefit-cost analysis, valuing the environment, environmental quality and pollution, environmental justice, economic surveys, and management of nonrenewable and renewable resources. In addition to the reading and discussions, students will apply the principles learned in this class through a Policy Analysis Project.

Policy Analysis Project: The goal of the project is to the apply techniques learned in the classroom to contemporary policy problems. For each policy considered students will be split into two separate groups and one group will provide economic arguments for the policy and the other will provide economic arguments against the policy. In the real world, deeper analysis of a problem often reveals that there are valid economic arguments on both sides of a given policy proposal. Grades will be assigned solely on each individual group’s ability to apply economic arguments to the policy considered (for example, the groups on both sides of an argument could get an A on their projects). The Policy Analysis Project will include a report and a presentation of your findings towards the end of the class. The specific projects undertaken in this class will be outlined in a separate handout.

HOMEWORK: There will be 4 homework assignments during the quarter. Homework is vital to gauging your understanding of the material. Assignments are due at the beginning of lecture; late assignments will not be accepted (without prior approval).

EXAMS: There will be 2 exams given during class covering course material. No make-up exams will be given (without prior approval).
PARTICIPATION AND DISCUSSION ACTIVITY: Students are expected to participate in a meaningful way in class. I strongly advise class attendance and participation. You will find that in economics, a deep understanding of key concepts facilitates high grades. Understanding of concepts is most easily attained with class attendance and participation.

GRADING
Grades will be based on the following:
- 4 Homework assignments (10 points each, 40 points total)
- 2 Exams (40 points each, 80 points total)
- Policy Analysis Project (30 points)
- Project Presentation (20 points)
- Participation (10+ points total)
- 180+ points possible

Course grades will be assigned at the end of the quarter based on the student's relative numerical standing in class based on the following percentages:
- A range: 90-100% of total points
- B range: 80-89% of total points
- C range: 70-79% of total points
- D range: 60-69% of total points
- F range: less than 59% of total points

The grading schedule is subject to change during the course of the quarter based on the overall performance of the class, but it will not be made more difficult.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: It is assumed that students know and understand Seattle University’s policies regarding plagiarism and academic honesty. Any deviation from said policies will not be tolerated! (http://www.seattleu.edu/regis/Policies/Policy_2004-01.htm).

LEARNING SERVICES AND DISABILITY: All students should consider using the SU Learning Assistance Programs as a tutoring and learning resource. They provide services to support academic success, including: Study Skills Workshops, 1-to-1 Peer Tutoring, Drop-in Tutoring, Study Groups, Language Conversation Groups, and Individual Learning Style and Study Skills Consultations. If you are interested in learning more about our program visit our website at: http://www.seattleu.edu/sas/learningassistance. If you have, or think you may have, a disability that interferes with your performance as a student in this class, you are encouraged to arrange support services and/or accommodations through Disabilities Services staff in the Learning Center, Loyola 100, (206)296-5740. Disability-based adjustments to course expectations can be arranged only through this process.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES: The use of laptops, netbooks or PDAs in class to take class-notes, view PowerPoints or work on class projects is allowed. However, please do not use laptops, netbooks or PDAs (cell phones, hand-holds) in class for any other non-class related activity (including instant messaging, web-browsing, etc.) unless specifically permitted by the instructor.