ECON 4200-002
Senior Seminar
Fall 2021
Mon and Wed, 4:00-5:15
Room: Friday 130
Instructor: Dr. Carol O. Stivender

“Try not to have a good time. This is supposed to be educational.”
Lucy, “Peanuts”

“It’s simple economics, son. I don’t understand it at all. But, god, I love it.”
Stan's Dad, “Southpark”

“Economics is everything, and everything is economics.”
Me

Office: 219D, Friday Building
E-mail: costiven@uncc.edu
Office Hours: Mon, Wed 1:15 to 2:15 (subject to change)

Optional Book: (cheap online) I will present this material in class
Title: The Good Society: The Humane Agenda, 1997
Author: John Kenneth Galbraith

Course Website: All other course materials are available on Canvas

Course Catalog Description: Senior Seminar. An integrative capstone course for the Economics major that should normally be taken during the student’s last semester of study. The primary objective is to provide a framework in which Senior Economics majors can review and solidify their understanding of economic concepts by applying those concepts to specific economic issues. Topics vary. Analytical ability and written and oral communication skills are assessed.

Calculating the grade:
Grades are simple. To earn an A, be there, turn in quality work on time, show us a quality presentation, and be fully engaged in class discussion. It’s really not that hard.

Attendance: Everyone begins the semester with perfect attendance. You have four cost-free non-presentation days, starting from the second class day of the semester. You can miss these classes for any reason (I recommend saving them for sick days, but it’s your call). After your four free days, each non-presentation class period missed will cost you 3 1/3 points off of your final grade. In other words, every 3 days missed will lower your final grade by 10 points, or one letter.

Attendance will usually be taken with a daily sign-in sheet. It is your responsibility to put your signature on the sheet. It is a violation of academic integrity for someone other than you to write your name on the sheet. Both the present and the absent student will be charged with the academic integrity violation, resulting in a failing grade in the course. Don’t risk it. You need to arrive on time and stay until class is over.

Every member of the class is required to attend all student presentations. It is unacceptable, unprofessional, and downright rude to show up for your own presentation and blow off those of your classmates. Presentations will be scheduled on a first come first served basis, then randomly. All presentations will occur in consecutive class meetings (if possible). ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY FOR ALL STUDENTS ON ALL PRESENTATION DAYS. EACH PRESENTATION DAY MISSED WILL RESULT IN THE LOSS OF ONE LETTER GRADE FROM THE FINAL COURSE GRADE.
Your primary source of information is the classroom – if something is announced in class I am under no obligation to also post that information online or notify the class via e-mail.

Participation/Engagement (35 pts): The Participation/Engagement grade begins at zero for everyone, and constitutes 35 points of the final grade. This portion of the grade includes written assignments you are asked to turn in. You will work your way up the points ladder by being engaged in class, asking and answering questions without being asked, giving cogent opinions on topics being discussed, respecting comments made by others (disagree, don’t disparage or criticize), paying attention to others (and me) as they speak. This is the squishiest part of the grade. How will I know when you have met the standard? To quote Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart when asked to define pornography – “I know it when I see it.”

Neglecting to turn in a written assignment will cost a letter grade. I will take assignments early, not late.

Presentations (50 pts): Topics must either be chosen from the list I provide or, if you choose something different that is not on my list, pre-approved by me before the topics deadline. Topic choices must be emailed and approved by Sunday, September 5th at 11:59pm. The earlier the better. Run original topics by me soon enough for adjustments to be made if I don’t approve your first idea. Only one presenter will be allowed to do each topic. See Canvas for topics that have already been chosen. (I will present some of the topics that you don’t choose).

Each presentation will occupy an entire 75 minute class period, including a visual/oral presentation followed by discussion/Q&A. Use PowerPoint and/or any other tools you choose (video, handouts, class participation, Krispy Kreme, whatever). Be as innovative as you want.

You will turn in the PowerPoint slides and copies of any other relevant material. Presentation slides are due in my email by Sunday, October 17th at 11:59pm, no matter when your presentation is scheduled (everyone has the same amount of time to prepare their presentation). You will be docked 10 grade points for every day the slides are late.

Presentations will be reviewed by each class member. These scores will be considered when grading the group project, and the presenter(s) with the top score will win a prize (to be determined).

Each of you will turn in a minimum 3-page typed paper reflecting what you learned about this topic while working on the presentation and why it matters (don’t just repeat the presentation). Papers should be double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point, with one inch margins all around. The grade on this paper will be reflected in your presentation grade. Papers are due in my hand in class on Wednesday, December 1, AND in my email by the end of the day (you can turn them in earlier, not later). These do NOT need to be formal papers. Use good grammar and writing skills, but just tell me about working on the topic and why it is important (or why it isn’t).

Heritage Assignment (15 pts)
Notes prepared for class discussions can be handwritten or typed, whichever is best for you. I’m not looking for style, neatness, spelling or form, I just want to know that you did the prep work.

Evaluation of Heritage Foundation Study
• Article is on Canvas.
• I have numbered the paragraphs in this paper. Use those paragraph numbers to reference your comments written (or typed) on separate sheets of paper. The point is to use critical thinking to evaluate the arguments made by the authors. Whether you agree with their conclusions or not, do they support their conclusions adequately? This kind of critical evaluation is an important skill - for example, if you agree with me that marijuana should be legal for recreational consumption, am I making a convincing argument for legalization by citing surveys showing most people think marijuana should be legal? The point is not whether you agree with the authors’ basic premise. Maybe you do, maybe you don’t. But do their arguments support their conclusions. (hint: some do, some don’t.)
• You should highlight and briefly discuss a minimum of 5 statements or passages. Do not feel the need to comment on every statement in the article. If you find yourself making the same comment about multiple highlighted sections, refer all of those statements to one comment.
• Hand your notes to me at the beginning of class, Wednesday, Sept. 8. Take a picture or make a copy of your comments before handing it to me so you can reference it during our discussion. DO YOUR OWN WORK. I need to be able to tell you read and evaluated the article, and noted at least five comment-worthy passages. You will need a copy of the article to follow me as I cite paragraph numbers and pages.
It is the current policy of UNC Charlotte that as a condition of on-campus enrollment, all students are required to engage in safe behaviors to avoid the spread of COVID-19 in the 49er community. Such behaviors specifically include the requirement that all students properly wear CDC-compliant face coverings in all indoor spaces on campus, including classrooms and labs, regardless of vaccination status. Failure to comply with this policy in the classroom or lab may result in dismissal from the current class session. If the student refuses to leave the classroom or lab after being dismissed, the student may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity for charges under the Code of Student Responsibility.

Policy on absenteeism during COVID-19:

Students are expected to attend every class and remain in class for the duration of the session when it is safe to do so in accordance with university guidance regarding COVID-19. Failure to attend class or arriving late may impact your ability to achieve course objectives which could affect your course grade. An absence, excused or unexcused, does not relieve a student of any course requirement. Regular class attendance is a student’s obligation, as is a responsibility for all the work of class meetings, including tests and written tasks. Any unexcused absence or excessive tardiness may result in a loss of participation points.

Students are encouraged to work directly with their instructors regarding their absence(s). For absences related to COVID-19, please adhere to the following:

- Complete your Niner Health Check each morning.
- Do not come to class if you are sick. Please protect your health and the health of others by staying home. Contact your healthcare provider if you believe you are ill.
- If you are sick: If you test positive or are evaluated by a healthcare provider for symptoms of COVID-19, indicate so on your Niner Health Check to alert the University. Submit a copy of your Niner Health Check notification email to your instructors. Upon learning that you have tested positive or have been diagnosed for symptoms of COVID-19, either from your reporting or from Student health Center testing or diagnosis, representatives from Emergency Management and/or the Student Health Center will follow up with you, and your instructors will be notified of the need for accommodations, as necessary.
- If you have been exposed to COVID-19 positive individuals and/or have been notified to self-quarantine due to exposure, indicate so on your Niner Health Check to alert the University. Representatives from Emergency Management and/or the Student Health Center will follow up with you as necessary. Submit a copy of your Niner Health Check notification email to your instructors. If you need any additional support verifying your absence after you have communicated with your professors, contact Student Assistance and Support Services.

To return to class after being absent due to a period of self-quarantine, students should submit a copy of their Niner Health Check clearance email to their instructor(s). To return to class after being absent due to a COVID-19 diagnosis, students should submit an online request form to Student Assistance and Support Services (SASS). Supporting documentation can be attached directly to the request form and should be from a student’s health care provider or the Student Health Center, clearly indicating the dates of absences and the date the student is able to return to class. Instructors will be notified of such absences.

Respect for Others:
I will conduct this class in an atmosphere of mutual respect. I encourage your active participation in class discussions. Each of us may have strongly differing opinions on the various topics of class discussions. The conflict of ideas is encouraged and welcome. The orderly questioning of the ideas of others, including mine, is similarly welcome. However, I will exercise my responsibility to manage the discussions so that ideas and argument can proceed in an orderly fashion. You should expect that if your conduct during class discussions seriously disrupts the atmosphere of mutual respect I expect in this class, you will not be permitted to participate further.

Academic Integrity:
Students have the responsibility to know and observe the requirements of The UNC Charlotte Code of Student Academic Integrity. (This code forbids cheating, fabrication or falsification of information, multiple submissions of academic work, plagiarism, abuse of academic materials, and complicity in academic dishonesty. Any special requirements or permission regarding academic integrity in this course will be stated by the instructor and are binding on the students. Academic evaluations in this course include a judgment that the student’s work is free from academic dishonesty of any type; and grades in this course therefore should be and will be adversely affected by academic dishonesty. Students who violate the code can be expelled from UNC Charlotte. The normal penalty for a first offense is zero credit on the work involving dishonesty and further substantial reduction of the course grade. In almost all cases, the course grade is reduced to F. Copies of the code can be obtained from the Dean of Students Office. Standards of academic integrity will be enforced in this course. Students are expected to report cases of academic dishonesty to the course instructor.)
Diversity:
The Belk College of Business strives to create an inclusive academic climate in which the dignity of all individuals is respected and maintained. Therefore, we celebrate diversity that includes, but is not limited to ability/disability, age, culture, ethnicity, gender, language, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status.

Food Insecurity:
Food insecurity is defined by the USDA as “a lack of access to enough food for an active, healthy life.” Food insecure categories include: reduced caloric intake, reduced food quality, lack of variety in diet, disrupted eating patterns, and hunger. Research shows that college students experience food insecurity at higher rates than the American household rate, and that food insecurity can negatively impact academic performance and persistence. In recognition of this problem, UNC Charlotte offers assistance to students facing food insecurity through an on-campus food pantry. The Jamil Niner Student Pantry (JNSP) is located on the east edge of campus at 1224 John Kirk Road. It has regular hours which may change from semester to semester; please see the website at https://ninерpantry.uncc.edu/ for schedule and details on its services, as well as resources about hunger and food insecurity among college students.