

ECON 305 – Comparative Economic Systems

University of Nevada, Reno
TR 9:30 - 10:45 AM
SEM 234

Professor Elliott Parker

Office: AB 319-C
Office Hours: MWF 9:30 – 10:30 AM
e-mail: eparker@unr.edu

Fall 2008 Short Syllabus

The full syllabus for this course is on my homepage at <http://www.coba.unr.edu/faculty/parker/econ305>. You will also be subscribed to the econ305@unr.edu e-mail list, and if you have a spam feature you may need to explicitly allow messages from this list.

Course Description:

ECON 305 examines the major economic systems of the world, in both theory and practice. The approach will generally focus on encouraging a general understanding of how economic systems work and how economic theory interacts with government policy, history, and culture to explain economic performance. Economies examined in some detail will include several advanced market capitalist countries (e.g., the U.S., Japan, France, Sweden, and Germany), the former socialist economies (e.g, the former Soviet Union, Poland, and China), and other East Asian economies (e.g., South Korea and North Korea). We will also consider Iran as an example of an Islamic-based economy, and India as an example of an isolationist country that is now beginning to join the global economy. ECON 102 and 103 are both required, but this course will be less quantitative than other theory courses. As a course which spends substantial time focused on the diversity of economies, ECON 305 meets the diversity requirement of the University Core Curriculum. One component of the diversity requirement is a rigorous writing requirement.

Books:

Required textbook: Rosser, J. Barkley, Jr., & Marina V. Rosser (2004), *Comparative Economics in a Transforming World Economy*, Second Edition. MIT Press. ISBN 0262182343.

Optional books (read at least one):

- ❖ Olson, Mancur (2000), *Power and Prosperity*. Basic Books.
- ❖ Friedman, Thomas (2000), *The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization*. Anchor Books.
- ❖ Bernstein, William J. (2004), *The Birth of Plenty: How the Prosperity of the Modern World was Created*. McGraw-Hill.

These books are available at the ASUN Bookstore in the Crowley Student Union, or online. See the class website for details. Other readings listed in the online schedule are available online or for library use only at the reserve desk.

Grading:

This course requires a significant amount of writing, and your ability to express yourself clearly in writing will significantly affect your grade. Grading will depend on three examinations (two midterms and a final), each worth 20%; a first paper, worth 10%; a second research paper, worth 20%; and daily one-minute essays or other in-class assignments, worth a total of 10%. The exams will be long, in-class, closed-book, and mostly essays, requiring both an ability to express yourself in writing and a good understanding of the lectures and the assigned readings. Papers will be assigned at least three weeks in advance of their due dates, and are expected to be in formal academic style; the first paper is 6-7 typed pages requiring minimal outside research, whereas the second paper is a more formidable research paper of 12-15 pages in length. Samples will be available on the course webpage.

Schedule:

Details of the lecture schedule and reading assignments are given on the course webpage. The first and second exams are tentatively scheduled for September 30 and November 6. The final exam is scheduled by the university for Friday, December 12, 7:30-9:30 AM. It is your responsibility to be in class for these exams.