The University of Oklahoma  
College of Continuing Education  
Advanced Programs – Course Syllabus

Course Title:
Economics and Public Policy

Course Number:
ECON 5990-108

Course Description:
This course will use simple economic tools to analyze the effectiveness of public policies implemented in the United States. The course is inter-disciplinary and non-quantitative by nature. The course will provide insight into policy making and will be a valuable learning experience for any student who wishes to pursue a career in Education, Healthcare, Environmental sector, State and Federal Policy Making, and Law.

This course will focus on the applications of basic economic concepts to real world issues. Using Microeconomic tools, we will choose select issues and analyze the basic economic and political objectives behind implementation of the policies and the effectiveness of such policies on economic growth, human development, and long-term effects on the environment, health, and labor market. Topics to be analyzed include but are not limited to: poverty and economic inequality, importance of human capital in the development process, youth unemployment in the world, health care in the United States, immigration policies, crime and incarceration policies, and the relationship between economic growth and world peace.

Appropriate and recent readings will be assigned before each semester and the class will be highly discussion based.

Class Dates, Location and Hours:
- Dates: October 14-16 & 21-23, 2016
- Location: OCCE, Norman, Oklahoma. Classes are held at the Thurman White Forum Building of OCCE, 1704 Asp Avenue.
- Hours: Friday 5:30-9:30 p.m.; Saturday 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Sunday 1:00-5:00 p.m.
- Last day to enroll or drop without penalty: September 15, 2016

Site Director:
Bethany Piscitelli. Assistant: Carmen Weeks. Phone: 405-325-3333; Fax: 405-325-9148; email: apnorman@ou.edu

Professor Contact Information:
- Course Professor: Dr. Aparna Mitra
- Mailing Address: 308 Cate Center Drive, Rm 321 Cate 1
  Norman, OK 73019
- Telephone Number: (405)325-5859
- Email: amitra@ou.edu
- Professor availability: The professor will be available via e-mail to students before and after the class sessions. On-site office hours are half an hour before and after each class session, by appointment.

Instructional Materials:
There are no textbooks for this course. Readings on each topic will be posted on D2L one month before the course starts. Access D2L at http://learn.ou.edu; enter your OU NetID and password, and select course to access material. Please contact your local Site Director if you require assistance.
Online Readings:
This course is not technical but requires extensive reading and writing, therefore it is imperative that you do your readings prior to class. Major emphasis will be placed on discussions, research, and classroom debates. Please consult the following websites frequently to contribute to meaningful discussions in class.

- U.S. Department of Labor: [www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov)
- National Center for Education Statistics: [www.nces.edu](http://www.nces.edu)
- U.S. Census Bureau: [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)
- National Poverty Center, University of Michigan: [http://npc.umich.edu/about_us/](http://npc.umich.edu/about_us/)

Course Objectives:
The course will provide insight into policy making and will be a valuable learning experience for any student who wishes to pursue a career in Education, Healthcare, Law, State and Federal Policy Making, and Law.

Course Outline:

**Topic I: Regulations, Taxes, and Subsidies**
- Introduction to the Course
- Microeconomic Tools – Demand, Supply, and the Market System
- Agricultural Subsidies in the U.S.
- legalization of drugs in the U.S.
- Obesity and taxation

**Topic II: Educational Policies and Labor Market Institutions**
- The Human Capital Model
- The Marxist Views on Education
- Quality of Schooling in America
- Investment in college education
- Education and earnings
- Youth unemployment
- The Secondary Labor Market
- Minimum Wage and the Earned Income Tax Credit

**Topic III: Immigration Policies in the U.S.**
- Legislation
- Impact of legal immigration on the economy
- Illegal immigration in the past and present

**Topic IV: Discrimination**
- Discrimination in the labor market
- Racism and Racial discrimination
- Polarization in education and earnings
- Residential segregation
- Health of minorities

**Topic V: The Criminal Justice System**
- Incarceration rates for African-Americans
- Collateral Costs of Incarceration
Topic IV: Income Inequality and Poverty

- Poverty and Income Inequality
- CEO pay in America
- The Feminization of poverty
- Child poverty

Topic V: Family Issues

- The changing family structure in America
- Single mothers and poverty
- Our current welfare system
- The demise of marriage
- Implications for children’s development

Assignments, Grading and Due Dates:

Final Examination:
Students will take a final exam on the last day of class. Please bring some paper and a stapler for the test.

Post Seminar Assignment:
The post seminar assignment involves writing a structured term paper (15 or more pages) on any issue/s related to public policy in the U.S. The paper should be divided into different sections such as, Introduction, Background, Analysis, and Conclusion along with a bibliography. The required structure of the paper will be posted on D2L and details will be discussed in class.

Grading:
This is a letter-graded course: A, B, C, D, or F.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Percent of Grade</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Discussions</td>
<td>During class sessions</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Presentation</td>
<td>During class sessions</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>Last class session</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post-seminar Assignment</td>
<td>Due November 6, 2016</td>
<td>30%</td>
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Notice: Failure to meet assignment due dates could result in a grade of I (Incomplete) and may adversely impact Tuition Assistance and/or Financial Aid.
POLICIES AND NOTICES

Attendance/Grade Policy

Attendance and participation in interaction, individual assignments, group exercises, simulations, role playing, etc. are valuable aspects of any course because much of the learning comes from discussions in class with other students. It is expected that you attend all classes and be on time except for excused emergencies.

Excused absences are given for professor mandated activities or legally required activities such as emergencies or military assignments. It is the policy of the University to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required class work that may fall on religious holidays. Unavoidable personal emergencies, including (but not limited to) serious illness; delays in getting to class because of accidents, etc.; deaths and funerals, and hazardous road conditions will be excused.

If you are obtaining financial assistance (TA, STAP, FA, VA, Scholarship, etc.) to pay all or part of your tuition cost, you must follow your funding agency/institution’s policy regarding “I” (Incomplete) grades unless the timeline is longer than what the University policy allows then you must adhere to the University policy. Students who receive Financial Aid must resolve/complete any “I” (Incomplete) grades by the end of the term or he/she may be placed on “financial aid probation.” If the “I” grade is not resolved/completed by the end of the following term, the student’s Financial Aid may be suspended make the student ineligible for further Financial Aid.

Students are responsible for meeting the guidelines of Tuition Assistance and Veterans Assistance. See the education counselor at your local education center for a complete description of your TA or VA requirements.

Academic Integrity and Student Conduct

Academic integrity means honesty and responsibility in scholarship. Academic assignments exist to help students learn; grades exist to show how fully this goal is attained. Therefore all work and all grades should result from the student's own understanding and effort.

Academic misconduct is any act which improperly affects the evaluation of a student’s academic performance or achievement. Misconduct occurs when the student either knows or reasonably should know that the act constitutes misconduct. Academic misconduct includes: cheating and using unauthorized materials on examinations and other assignments; improper collaboration, submitting the same assignment for different classes (self-plagiarism); fabrication, forgery, alteration of documents, lying, etc…in order to obtain an academic advantage; assisting others in academic misconduct; attempting to commit academic misconduct; destruction of property, hacking, etc…; intimidation and interference with integrity process; and plagiarism. All students should review the Student’s Guide to Academic Integrity at http://integrity.ou.edu/students_guide.html

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. All students should review policies regarding student conduct at http://studentconduct.ou.edu/

Accommodation Statement

The University of Oklahoma is committed to making its activities as accessible as possible. For accommodations on the basis of disability, please contact your local OU Site Director.

Course Policies

Advanced Programs policy is to order books in paperback if available. Courses, dates, and professors are subject to change. Please check with your OU Site Director. Students should retain a copy of any assignments that are mailed to the professor for the course. Advanced Programs does not provide duplicating services or office supplies.

Any and all course materials, syllabus, lessons, lectures, etc. are the property of professor teaching the course and the Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma and are protected under applicable copyright.

For more information about Advanced Programs, visit our website at: http://www.goou.ou.edu/
INSTRUCTOR VITA
Aparna Mitra, Ph.D.

Education
Ph.D., University of Texas at Dallas

Current Positions
• Associate Professor of Economics, Department of Economics, University of Oklahoma
• Director, Advanced Program in Economics, Department of Economics, University of Oklahoma
• Presidential Teaching Fellow in Honors, 2016-18

Frequently Taught Advanced Programs Courses
• ECON 5990 Labor Economics
• ECON 5990 Economics as Public Policy
• ECON 5990 Discrimination in Labor Markets
• ECON 5033 Managerial Economics I
• ECON 5990 Poverty, Income Inequality, and Public Policy

Major Areas of Teaching and Research Interest
• Labor Economics
• Economic Development
• Economics of Race and Gender
• Gender and Labor Markets in Developing Countries
• Economics of Aging
• Economic Development in India

Representative Publications and Presentations
• “Son Preference in India: Implications for Gender Development,” Journal of Economic Issues, December, 2014
Conference Presentations

• “Intimate Partner Violence and Women’s Mental Health in India,” Southern Economic Association, November 2013
• “Son Preference in India: Implications for Gender Development,” 14th World Congress of Social Economics, Glasgow, Scotland, June 2012
• “Single Mothers and the Contributions of Nonresidential Fathers,” Southern Economic Association, Washington, DC, November 2011
• “Gender Violence and Women’s Mental Health in India,” 13th World Congress for Social Economics, Montreal, Canada, June 2010
• “Gender Inequality and the Spread of HIV/AIDS in India,” Southwestern Economics Association, Houston, April 2010

Representative Honors and Awards Received

• Regents’ Award for Superior Teaching, University of Oklahoma, 2016
• Presidential Teaching Fellow in Honors, 2016-18
• Patten Award for Outstanding Teaching in the Humanities, College of Arts and Sciences, 2013
• Outstanding Undergraduate Economics Professor, Department of Economics, 2011
• Most Inspiring Faculty, OU Athletes, 2011
• Presidential “Dream Course” Award, University of Oklahoma, 2009
• Presidential Distinguished Faculty Mentor, University of Oklahoma, fall, 2008, 2009

Major Professional Affiliations

• Association for Social Economics
• Society for the Advancement of Behavioral Economics
• Southwest Regional Director, Association for Social Economics, 2010-
• President, Southwestern Economics Association, 2004-2005