

Course description

Course title: Economic Theory	Neptune code of course: GTGKG401A Institute offering the course: Institute of Economics Theory and Methodology
	Course type: core
Course coordinator:	Zoltan Bartha, Phd zoltan.bartha@ekon.me
Teaching staff involved:	
Place & time of classes	A4/421B
Recommended semester: 1 Autumn	Precondition: -
Number of lessons/week: 2+0	Acknowledgement of course completion: signature, written exam
Credit value: 5	Training format: full-time
Aim and content of course: The purpose of this course is to help students deepen their knowledge in economics, and learn how to use economic theories and concepts to back their arguments.	
Competences to be developed: <i>Knowledge:</i> understanding of the macroeconomic environment <i>Skills:</i> debating economics issues <i>Attitudes:</i> critical thinking <i>Autonomy and responsibility:</i> formulating own opinion	
Thematic description of course content:	
	Lecture:
25/Sep 8:00-11:30	Introduction of the students and the main topics The agenda of economics; why don't most theories work Special topic of the semester: theories, myths, and reality of international trade, investments
11/Nov 8:00-11:30	Ch1: The Lexus and the olive tree revisited - Myths and facts about globalization Ch2: The double life of Daniel Defoe - How did the rich countries become rich? Ch3: My six-year-old son should get a job - Is free trade always the answer?
15/Nov 8:00-11:30	Ch4: The Finn and the elephant - Should we regulate foreign investment? Ch5: Man exploits man - Private enterprise good, public enterprise bad? Ch6: Windows 98 in 1997 - Is it wrong to 'borrow' ideas?
15/Nov 12:30-16:00	Ch7: Mission impossible? - Can financial prudence go too far? Ch8: Zaire vs Indonesia - Should we turn our backs on corrupt and undemocratic countries? Ch9: Lazy Japanese and thieving Germans - Are some cultures incapable of economic development?
We discuss some of the key economic concepts of open economies which requires the active participation of students.	
Method and evaluation of in-semester assessment: <i>Requirements for obtaining the signature:</i> Signature is awarded to students who get a minimum of 5 points to class participation (which means that they would have taken part in at least 2 out of total 4 classes during the semester)	
Completion requirements and evaluation criteria for seminar grades and exams: you may only get a final grade if you obtained a signature from the course	
Oral/written exams, or specific methods/practices applied during the course: The final grade is a combination of three elements:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. active class participation: max. 10 points 2. presentation on a pre-agreed topic: max. 60 points 3. final essay: max. 30 points 	

Grading: 0-50 points: fail; 51-60 points: pass; 61-70 points: medium; 71-85: good; 86-100: excellent.

Presentation details:

- app. 25-30 minutes, the use of ppt is encouraged
- the topic is one of the items featured in the course schedule (see above)
- the time is the date of the class that features the topic
- contents: summarising the main arguments of the chapter, pointing out the economic theories on which the arguments can be based on, and taking a critical approach, listing pro and con arguments
- when preparing and giving the presentation, please consider presenting the context first, that explains the audience why your topic is relevant for them; try to capture their attention; always try to express your own perspective on the issue, be critical, do not automatically accept the argument of the book's author; end your presentation with pro and con arguments
- following the presentation, the class discusses the topic

Essay details:

- 5-8 pages
- gives a short summary about the topic of the presentation, but the main purpose is to reflect on the questions, arguments brought up during the class discussion
- should be sent to zoltan.bartha@ekon.me, 20 January at the latest.

Required reading:

Ha-Joon Chang: *Bad Samaritans. The myth of free trade, and the secret history of capitalism.* Bloomsbury Press, 2008.

Suggested reading:

Recent issues of *The Economist*: <http://www.economist.com/>

New Frontiers in Economics Ed. by M. Szenberg and L. Ramrattan. Cambridge University Press, 2004

Steven D. Levitt & Stephen J. Dubner: *Freakonomics [Revised and Expanded]: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything.* HarperCollins Publishers, 2005. ISBN: 978-0-06-123400-2

Steven D. Levitt & Stephen J. Dubner: *SuperFreakonomics: Global Cooling, Patriotic Prostitutes, and Why Suicide Bombers Should Buy Life Insurance.* HarperCollins Publishers, New York, 2009. ISBN: 978-0-06-1927575-7

The CORE econ textbook: <https://core-econ.org/the-economy/book/text/0-3-contents.html>