

San José State University
College of Social Sciences/Department of Economics
ECON 141, Law and Economics, Section 01, Spring 2019

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Dr. Darwyn Deyo
Office Location:	DMH 142
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Email:	darwyn.deyo@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	W 1:30pm – 2:30pm and by appointment
Class Days/Time:	MW 3:00 – 4:15pm
Classroom:	DMH 166
Prerequisites:	Prerequisites: STAT 95 or ECON 3; 100W. Previous education in economics is helpful but not essential.

Course Description

Students in this course will examine the economic effects of legal institutions, existing and proposed, and apply economic analysis to the law. The course will teach students to evaluate the interactions between legal and economic principles and introduce students to standard topics such as property rights, contracts, liability, and torts. Students will be expected to complete homework, two exams, a paper proposal, peer edits, a paper presentation and an original final research paper related to law and economics.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Have a deeper understanding of the law and economics literature.
2. Be able to apply economic analysis to proposed and existing legal rulemaking.
3. Work with and analyze datasets for statistical analysis.
4. Develop a research paper on a topic related to law and economics.

Required Readings

[CO] Robert D. Cooter and Thomas Ulen, *Law and Economics* (6th edition). ISBN 978-0132540650.
[PO] A. Mitchell Polinsky, *An Introduction to Law and Economics* (4th edition). ISBN 9780735584488
[FR] David Friedman, *Law's Order*, ISBN 9780691090092.
Articles and handouts posted on Canvas

Recommended Readings

[BO] Wayne C. Booth, *The Craft of Research* (4th edition). ISBN 978-0226239736.
[MC] Deirdre N. McCloskey, *Economical Writing* (2nd edition). ISBN 9781577660637.

Note that the Cooter and Ulen text is available free online as a PDF from UC Berkeley:
<https://scholarship.law.berkeley.edu/books/2/>

Course Requirements and Assignments

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

Key Semester Dates

First Day of Class – January 28
Last Day to Drop Classes – February 5
Homework #1 – February 20
Paper Topics Due – February 20
Homework #2 – March 6
Proposal Due – March 6
Exam #1 – March 13
Homework #3 – April 10
Spring Break – April 1 – 5
Last Chance for Proposals – April 8
First Draft Due – April 17
Peer Edits Workshop – April 17
Homework #4 – April 24
Exam #2 – May 1
Last Day of Classes – May 13
Final Paper Due in Canvas – May 20

Participation

Participation will be assessed at random intervals through the semester. Participation is assessed via quizzes on the reading, class activities, workshops, and other participation-based activities at my discretion. If you perform at least 1% better than the class average for participation, I will add 1% to your final weighted score (e.g. if you earned 8% out of the possible 10%, you would then have a recorded 9%).

Homework Assignments

There will be four homework assignments during the semester to be presented in class. You may work on the homework assignments together. Homework questions will be posted on Canvas one week before they are due. Late homework will not be accepted, *including late arrival to class*. Students who decline to present a homework question will receive zero credit for the assignment.

Exams

There will be two exams in this course. If a student must miss an exam, this should be discussed with me at least one week ahead of time. In the event of an emergency, students should email me immediately and provide documentation ASAP. Please note that if a student misses an exam and I have not accepted a student's excuse, a grade of "0" will be given. If the absence is excused, the weight of the missing exam will be distributed across the remaining course material. Students should bring a scantron for the exam. Calculators are not

permitted.

Final Paper

As part of this course, each student will propose and submit a *research* paper on a subject related to law and economics. The final paper is due in Canvas on the day of the university scheduled final exam, **May 20**, and should run between 8 to 10 pages of text, double spaced, Times New Roman font, size 12, 1 inch margins in a Word Document (.doc or .docx). Tables and references do not contribute to the page count. Your final paper must be submitted to Canvas by **May 20** to receive credit. The final paper will be graded using a distributed rubric. In addition to the text of your paper, you must include the analysis output used to generate your results (Excel, R, Python, Stata, etc) with your submission.

Research Paper Topic

In order to prepare for the final paper proposal, you will submit a *specific* 1 paragraph summary in Canvas by **February 20** stating the research topic you intend to focus on. If you do not submit your topic on time, you will automatically lose half-credit for the paper proposal. You do not have to wait until the due date (and I recommend you don't!) to submit this topic. I will then give feedback before your proposals are due.

Paper Proposal

In order to prepare for the final research paper, you will submit a 1-2 page proposal in Canvas by **March 6** stating the research question and hypothesis, data sources, methods, and five economic journal citations you plan to use (refer to the Canvas Template). I will then approve this proposal or require adjustments before you proceed. You do not have to wait until the due date (and I recommend you don't!) to submit this proposal. The proposal operates on a PASS/FAIL basis. You may find McCloskey and Booth particularly helpful when writing the proposal and final paper. If you receive a RESUBMIT, you must rework the proposal based on my comments by **April 8**.

First Draft and Peer Edits

The first draft of your paper (minimum 5 pages) is due in class on **April 17**. You also need to upload a copy to Canvas by midnight *before* class. Bring **two physical copies** of the paper to class on **April 17**. Digital copies are *not* permitted. Make sure to staple your paper and bring a red pen (or another non-black, non-blue, non-pencil pen of your choice). We will then conduct in-class peer review edits using the final paper rubric with which you will be graded. It is your responsibility to make sure you bring your paper to class. Failure to provide a draft for someone else to grade will result in zero credit for the peer edit. You will then be graded on the quality of the peer edits you provide to your classmate's paper.

Paper Presentation

You will also give a short ten minute presentation on your paper, which must be emailed to me by midnight before the day of your presentation. You may use a PowerPoint or a PDF file. The presentation will be graded using a distributed rubric.

Course Component	Student Work	Instructor Engagement
Regular 3 units (9 h/wk)	Readings, Homework, Exams, Final Presentation, Final Paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class contact hours • Prepare in-class activities • Evaluate student work and provide specific and actionable feedback
Activity 1 unit (3 h/wk)	Workshops, Proposal, First Draft, Peer Edits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and lead stats workshop including an introduction to data collection • Plan and lead writing workshops • Evaluate student work and provide specific and actionable feedback

Grading Information

Determination of Grades

This course must be passed with a C or better as an SJSU graduation requirement. The final grade in the course will be based on the following weights:

Category	Weight
Participation	10%
Homework	20%
First Exam	10%
Second Exam	15%
Paper Proposal	5%
First Draft	10%
Peer Edits	5%
Paper Presentation	5%
Final Paper	20%

These weights are fixed - improvement in other categories will not raise your grades elsewhere except as stated otherwise. Late work will not be accepted.

Grading Scale

A+: 97 to 100 A: 94 to 96 A-: 90 to 93
 B+: 87 to 89 B: 84 to 86 B-: 80 to 83
 C+: 77 to 79 C: 74 to 76 C-: 70 to 73
 D: 60 to 69
 F: <60

Classroom Protocol

Office Hours

The best way to contact me is by email at darwynn.deyo@sjsu.edu. My office hours are Wednesday, 1:30 – 2:30pm in my office, DMH 142, and by appointment. Many questions can be answered quickly over email.

Academic Honesty

I take academic honesty very seriously and will follow the policies as published by SJSU. These policies are online and available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/S07-2.htm>. It is the responsibility of the student to read and understand what constitutes a violation of the honor code. Claims of ignorance cannot be used to justify dishonest behaviors. All instances of academic dishonesty will be reported through the appropriate channels. In this course, any student caught engaging in activities which violate the honor code as written by the University will receive a semester grade of “F” for this course. I also require all students to take the SJSU Plagiarism Tutorial & Quiz at <https://libguides.sjsu.edu/plagiarism>. Results can be forwarded to me by email or printed out in class.

Disability Notice

Please see me as soon as possible if you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated. Presidential Directive 97-03 at http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the Disability Resource Center at <http://www.drc.sjsu.edu/> to establish a record of their disability.

Other Class Policies

1. Students will show respect at all times for others. Class will begin on time and end on time. As such, students are expected to be on time.
2. So as to minimize any disruption to class, ensure that any electronic devices you bring with you to class are set to not produce any sounds during class. This includes setting cell phones to vibrate or silent and muting the speakers on laptops and tablets. Students using their cell phones or laptops for non-class related activities will be asked to leave the room. If you are using a laptop or tablet, I also require that you sit in the front two rows of the class.
3. Students must use their SJSU email to communicate with me regarding course material and messages related to this class. I will make an effort to reply to emails related to the course within 48 hours, excepting weekends, but I will not accept email attachments from non-SJSU emails.
4. I primarily use Canvas for announcements, handouts, articles, and for students to submit their written work. I encourage students to use Criterion before submitting their final paper to me in order to minimize the number of revisions. Students must submit all final written work to Canvas.

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/> Make sure to review these policies and resources.

ECON 141-01 / Law and Economics, Spring 2019 Course Schedule

My proposed schedule for the semester follows. If it proves too ambitious, I will try to simply say less about each topic rather than cut the topics for the final weeks. In addition to the textbook readings for each week, students should read the articles associated with each topic posted on Canvas.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	Jan 28 & 30	Introduction and Economic Efficiency (CO 1-2; PO 1; FR 1-2)
2	Feb 4 & 6	Property Rights (CO 3-4; PO 2; FR 3-5, 10)
3	Feb 11 & 13	Externalities and the Coase Theorem (CO 5; PO 3-4; FR 6, 11)
4	Feb 18 & 20	Contracts and Breach (CO 8-9; PO 5-7; FR 12); HW #1 & Paper Topics Due (Feb 20)
5	Feb 25 & 27	<i>Librarian Visit</i> (Feb 25); <i>Proposal Workshop</i> (Feb 27)
6	Mar 4 & 6	Product Liability (CO 10-11; PO 14, 17); HW #2 & Proposal Due (Mar 6)
7	Mar 11 & 13	Exam Review; Exam #1 (Mar 13)
8	Mar 18 & 20	Torts, Courts, and the Rational Basis Test (CO 6-7; PO 16; FR 7, 14)
9	Mar 25 & 27	The Economics of Crime...and Punishment (CO 12-13; PO 10-11; FR 15, 18)
10	<i>Apr 1 – 5</i>	<i>Spring Break</i>
11	Apr 8 & 10	<i>Writing Workshop</i> (April 8); HW #3 (Apr 10)
12	Apr 15 & 17	Takings (Canvas); First Draft Due & Peer Edits (Apr 17)
13	Apr 22 & 24	Law, not Legislation (FR 17, 19); HW #4 (April 24)
14	Apr 29 & May 1	Exam Review; Exam #2 (May 1)
15	May 6 & 8	<i>Writing Workshop</i> (May 6); Final Paper Presentations (May 8)
16	May 13	Final Paper Presentations & Last Day of Class
Final Paper Due	May 20	Final Paper Due in Canvas