

Your purpose is to learn economics so you won't be a foolish person. If you're still foolish after this class, you've learned nothing. Economics is very easy, really, but you can make it much more difficult if you want to.

Your grade each six weeks will be split four ways:

One Big Test: 25%

Book Study Project: 25%

Quizzes and Minor Projects: 25%

Class Work and Participation: 25%

Welcome to college, and a competitive one at that. You are expected to do most of the work. You are also expected to keep up with things on your own. My purpose as instructor is to provide information not in the book, or to provide information from the text presented in a different way. My second purpose as an instructor, no less important, is to assess your performance and pass judgment on it.

Here is fair warning: this is to prepare you for college. Roughly a third of all people who attempt to get a four-year degree actually do so. Intelligence and the good graces of your parents mean nothing if there is an insufficient quantity of your effort behind them. I have seen brilliant people burn out and settle for less because they did not know how to make the mental change from high school to college. This includes valedictorians and National Merit Finalists. This doesn't make them failures, just not able to take paths of life that require college degrees to head down.

If you treat this course like another high school class, you'll waste a valuable experience and will likely get a C. Don't worry, with the 8 Quality Points, it'll be a B on your transcript, most likely. Therefore, from this point forward, treat this course differently.

One aspect of this difference is my expectation for you to read effectively. You should take Cornell Notes on every chapter we read, 1-15 and 37-39. You should use the "Key Questions" at the end of each chapter as your review questions within your notes. For each book I assign, I will expect you to produce a two-page paper that refers to material in the book and brings in outside information. You'll have to read outside information, as well, to do those papers properly.

You'll also have to research things. This means going to www.google.com and using well-chosen key words to find what you're looking for. If you say you can't find things, then you're either not trying enough or not thinking enough. I have little tolerance for either condition: cure yourself of these ailments.

The **One Big Test** will be based on questions from previous AP examinations. At the start of the six weeks, I'll give you a previous AP exam to work with. Your job will be to answer all of the questions on that test and use that information to study for the One Big Test. Yes, you will need to study. The questions deal with topics from all over the book, so you'll have to jump ahead to get answers. I'm here to help, as are your classmates. Just remember your purpose is to learn, not cheat, and you'll learn.

If you're deserving and pleasant to be with, I'll permit you to use a posterboard with notes on it for your first test - *maybe* the second. You may write on the front and back and include charts with explanations, if you think it'll help. For my part, I'll either use exact questions from the AP exam or questions very similar to ones from the AP exam, so don't memorize exact answers. Instead, learn what you need to learn, and you'll do fine.

The **Book Study Project** will involve reading a book I assign and then doing a project based on it. Your purpose here is to read the book, not lie to me about having read it. The books are all easy. The projects are also easy, and hopefully fun. Why would you lie about having fun? That would be foolish, and you'd learn nothing. No, you read the book and do the fun project. I'll tell you about your projects later. I do want these finished early in the six weeks because I don't want to compete with your other classes for good work.

Quizzes and Minor Projects will include a test over a minor project and the free-response quizzes. The free-response quizzes will be based on free-response questions I assign as homework. Notice I don't grade homework. Homework is an opportunity for you to prepare yourself for a coming test. That's part of getting

ready for college, HINT HINT.

Class Work and Participation is where you will fall short if you don't use your imagination. Remember, this is a competitive class. If you hold back and act cool and say nothing, you get nothing in return. I'll check your chapter notes here, but they'll be only a small part of your grade. Chapter notes are due the week following the assignment of the chapters on the timeline and can be graded any time I have a spare moment to take the grade. There is no specific due-date for the grade, but we will operate under the assumption that they are due on the first school day of the week following assignment of the chapter.

The rest of this area is what you do in class. Do you ask questions? Do you make appropriate comments? Do you engage yourself in outside projects, over and above what I've asked for? Do you provide proof you've got both intelligence and drive? If you truly participate in class, in the room, online, and/or in further projects, you've got a sense of what it'll take to not only get your bachelor's degree, but also what kind of hustle you have to run to get into a good grad school.

What really disappoints me is when I toss out a topic for discussion and wind up with a monologue. I'm getting angry right now as I think about it as I type this. I used to give partial credit for showing up to class and just observing passively. Now I give nothing for that. You better be memorable, or I'll forget to give you enough points to get a B for the six weeks, and your professors will forget you entirely.

Although you can mathematically pass by doing a perfect job in each area, don't make the mistake of accounting for my subjective judgment. The book study and class participation are about 45% of your average, added up. If I give you a 90 on your paper because it met the minimum requirements on my rubric for an A and you say nothing to me in or out of class, you'll have a 78 for the six weeks, give or take a point, provided you do everything else perfectly, and you won't, so don't plan on that working. You have to impress me.

So where do you get the wherewithal to impress me? Hit the Internet. It's at your home, in a library, at a friend's house. You have access to it for free or at an affordable cost to you, so go get to it. I want you to read and ask questions about the Buttonwood articles at www.economist.com. I want you to poke around there for other macroeconomic topics. Look for things that are talking about some aspect of aggregate supply and aggregate demand, read 'em, and then discuss them. If we don't have time in class to cover the material, then hit the discussion boards at www.zzzptm.com/bbs. If you forget your account, just make up a new one with a fake email address. Just make sure you have your name in your account info somewhere so I can associate a post with a person.

While you're there, participate in the wider community available. I like it when the board is active at times other than the night before I work on your final averages. The more you're involved in the wider community, the more likely you are to be memorable to me. HINT HINT.

What else is there? Just ask. Stop by during 6th period if you can. I've got loads of movies and television programs and books that may not deal directly with economics, but are close enough for what we're doing to justify as being course-related. You watch or read, broaden your horizons, discuss with me - INTELLIGENTLY, as if you really did watch or read the subject matter - and I can hit you with some class participation points. More importantly, you'll have a deeper understanding of your world that you gathered on your own, the way you're supposed to do it if you're a lifelong learner.

And if you're not ready to be a lifelong learner, chances are you'll be a foolish person who doesn't realize his life's dreams because of a lack of sufficient follow-through. Between that and random disasters, success is hard to come by. That's why it's called *success*, not *life*. Believe me, it's a lot harder than it looks on the movies or teevee and there are a lot more variables at play than you can currently imagine. There are a lot more variables at play than *I* can imagine, but I can imagine more than you right now, so I'm in a position to help out.

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